The preface to the reader.

I Do not thynke good chryſten reader any reaſonable or indyfferent perſone lyuynge of ſo vndyſcrete and groſſe iudgement, nor yet ſo malycyous or frowarde to thynke this holſome & profytable doctryne of Chryſte, his apoſtles & prophetes in this lytle volume hereafter enſuynge, worthy eyther of checke, condempnacyon, or ſclaunder, for the vehemency therin nowe and then comprysed / yf at the leaſte there be any ſuche vehemency at all to the ſight of any, but of them whiche feele them ſelues ſenſyblye touched, and theyr vyces playnly rebuked in the ſame. Truthe it is, that there can be nothynge

MUSEUM

ſo wyſely warely or ſyncerely eyther pronounſed or endyted, whiche the blaſphemous tongues of falſe detractours & enemyes vnto the truthe can not craftely peruerte to yͤ worſte Examples therof be not ſo rare, but yͭ thou mayſte habundauntly fynde of them in euery place ynowe. Go to chryſte and his apoſtles, and ſe whether the byſſhops, the ſcrybes, & the pharyſeys, dyd not falſely impeche and accuſe theym of ſedycyon, and to proue theyr falſe and moſte vntrue ſuggeſtyon by theym made in that behalfe to yͤ hygh powers, note & marke well I beſeche the in readynge of the ſcrypture, how deuelyſſhely they do calumpnyate, ꝑuerte, wrythe, and wreſte theyr deades and doctryne. And yet yf they had ben any thyng ſo malycious as ſome

ſuche theyr ſucceſſours be nowe
a dayes, how many tymes more
myght they haue accuſed theym
of the ſame / As for an example, Act.4.
when the apoſtles were cōmaunded
no more to preache in yͤ name
of Jheſu / yea & yͭ not onely
by the byſſhops and preeſtꝭ, but
alſo by the auctorytie of the temporall
power, and were for the infryngynge
and breakyng of the
ſayd cōmaundement brought agayne
before the hygher power
aforeſayde, and had made theyr
anſwere, that they were bounden Act.5.
to obey god rather then mā.
Myghte not (I ſaye) the Jewes
then yf they had ben halfe ſo malycyouſlye
dyſpoſed as ben our
Jewes haue peruerted the ſayinges
of the apoſtles to the worſte,
and haue accuſed them of ſedycyon,
yea and of treaſon after
this

this maner: ye ſaye ſyrs, that ye muſt obey god rather then men: Ergo your doctryne is not to obeye men. Nowe knowe ye that we be no pryuate men, but men in Offyce, auctoryte and power, and to whome bothe you and all pryuate men ben bounden by the lawe of god to obey, and yet ye teche to the cōtrary. Wherfore we conclude you to be traytoures bothe to god & man, & maynteyners and ſtyrrers vp of ſedycyō, ſtryfe, and treaſon. Myght not (I beſeche you) the Jewes (as I ſayde before) thus haue wreſted the wordes of yͤ apoſtles to a falſe ſence, and otherwyſe then euer they ment? I pray you who coulde haue let or interrupted them? Or yf they had ſo done what remedy? Muſt not the poore innocente ſoules, the Apoſtles haue ſuſteyned ſo wꝛongfull and greuous iniurye=yes certeyne. Albe it the blyſſed Apoſtles entended nothynge leſſe then ſuch deteſtable doctryne. But theyꝛ meanynge was, that where man wolde cõmaunde any thyng to be done contrarye to the wylle of god, expꝛeſſed in his holye ſcrypture, that in ſuche caſe his cõmaundement ought not to be obeyed of what eſtate, power oꝛ dygnytye, ſoeuer he were oꝛ myght be. And yet not ſoo meanynge that he ſhulde be withſtanded with vyolence, but that rather then they ſhulde aſſente to the vyolatynge of goddes woꝛde and cõmaundemente, they were, wolde, and oughte to be redye to abyde and mekelye to ſuffre. What ſoeuer trouble, oꝛ perſecucyon myghte theron enſue oꝛ folowe, to the example

Act.5.

ample of all Chryſtes poſterytie after them to be borne. And this to be the true vnderſtandyng of theyr wordes appereth ryght manyfeſtly by yͤ practyſe of yͤ ſame and that imedyatly where after they had ben ſore bet for the preachynge of goddes true worde, whiche they were forbydde to do by man, they departed from the councell ryght ioyous, that god had elected theym to that dygnytie of his infynyte benygnytie & mercy/wherfore (I ſaye) in lyke maner, it is not impoſſyble, but that in this lytle boke, or in any boke ſome thynge may be of malyce taken to the worſte. But let no man malycyouſly wrynge, or wreſte the contentȝ & mater therof of a ſet purpoſe or feſtred rancoure. And I doubte not but vnto all good men, it ſhall appere,

Act.5.

bothe meke and mylde, godly, ⁊ alſo vertuous, and an argumēt plentuous of profitable erudycion ⁊ learnynge. And as for ſedycyon and treaſon I dare boldely affyrme it to be as innocent and farre from them as heuē is from helle. except peraduēture it mete with a ſophyſtycall deuyll, whiche can proue whyte to be blacke and truthe to be treaſon. The boke deſcrybeth paynteth and ſetteth forthe before thyne iyes (ſo that no appelles can do it more excellently) the Images both of a verye chryſten byſſhop, and alſo of a counterfayte byſſhop, of a profytable, and of an vnprofytable, of a paulyne, and of a papyſte, ſhortly of a true, and a falſe, yea and that it dothe in ſuche true, naturall, freſſhe, and lyuely coloures, that the one of them ones knowen, it is not poſſyble but a man muſte feele the other euen at his fyngers endes, Albeit he were more blynde then yͤ Molle. And in this doyng, euen as it is impoſſyble in deſcrybynge the good byſſhoppe to ſaye any thynge of hym, but that whiche is good, honeſte, vertuous, and godly, oneles he ſhuld deadlye belye hym: euen ſo contrarywyſe in deſcrybynge the euyll byſſhoppe, it is as impoſſyble to ſaye any thynge of hym, that good honeſt or vertuous is, oneles he ſhulde deadly belye hym, whiche of truthe were great pytye, for (as mẽ ſaye) it were ſynne to belye the deuyll. For aſmoche then as there can be no goodnes without great leſynge reported by the euyll byſſhop, what merueyll ueyl then or why ſhuld any man be dyſcontented but an euyll byſſhop, or the patron and defender of an euyll byſſhop / yf your Auctoure do ſet hym forth in his naturall proporcyon, lyke a monſtre as he is? Why ſhulde not a man declare a monſtre after a mõſtruous faſſhyon? Is it mete for a man to offre a candell to the deuyll, or to paynte hym lyke a good aungell? Is it not comelye and beſemynge for euery good and honeſt man, to exalte, & extolle vertue to yͤ vttermoſte of his power. And why then ſhulde not it become hym aſwell to depryue and ſuppreſſe vyce to the vttermoſte, and to enuye agaynſte it, and agaynſt theym that vſe it with all that he maye?

Fynally he deſcribeth a good, honeſt, vertuous & godly byſſhops as doth yͤ ſcripture, whom when thou knoweſt (except I be begyled) it ſhal be ryght eaſy to eſpye and knowe the other / wherin I humblye beſeche the father of al cõſolacyon ones to make vs perfecte, for yͤ precyous blode of his ſwete ſone Jheſu, and therto to graunte to vs his holy ſpyryte.

¶ So be it.

BEcauſe good and gentle reader, It maye to ſome certayne perſones eyther corrupte with euyll affeccyons or therwyſe lyghtely moued to vayne offence & ſlaūdre, ſeme that I am of ryght lytle charytie, and yͤ myne whole ſtudye, and endeuoyre ſoundeth to no purpoſe elles, but onely to rayſe trouble, ſtryfe, and ſedycyons in the worlde as they of a ſet frowardnes/ malycyouſly do calumpnyate, theyr cōdempned cōſcyence teſtyfyeng the contrarie, for that that I in deſpyte of the deuyll, & for the zele that I beare to the truthe of goddes worde, & his moſte blyſſed name, doo (as they thynke) ſomwhat to ſharply rebuke the vyce of ſome that wolde be eſtemed yͤ heddes of the churche, all vnworthye to be the ſete except they amende in tyme. Therfore as we entre in to the playne felde of oure matyer we entende purge vs of ſuche vntrue accuſacyons, and to proue it ryght mete and conuenyent, yea and therto neceſſarye, and that by reaſons and ſcrypturꝫ inuyncible, ſo to behaue vs, in our wordes and wrytyngꝫ towardes ſuche toppes and heddes of yͤ people whiche wyll admytte no charytable admonycyon.

The Canon law.

IN dede the byſſhop of Rome hathe forbeden in his vnryghtuous and wycked lawe Canonycall, that any man ſhulde ſharpely rebuke the prelates, or elles reſyſte theym/and vpon this goodly inſtytucion and ordynaunce, he and his counterfayte byſſhops, the ſones of hypocryſye from the moſte hygh maieſtye of god: For the preacher is bounde vnto this vndre parell of dampnacyon, that he ſhall ſharpely ⁊ ſore rebuke wycked men and ſynners. For god ſpeketh hereof manyfeſt and open rebukyng, in as moche as he hathe betaken vnto hym the offyce of preachyng his worde. But I praye you, why dothe god with ſo great vehemēcye requyre this thynge, cōmaunde it, and ſo ſtraytely call vpon it without doubte becauſe the preacher, yf he doo holde his tonge, dothe ſynne moſt greuouſly agaynſt charyte, in that he dothe eſteme at ſo ſmall value ſo great ⁊ ſo precyous a treaſure/that is to wyt, the ſoule helth of his neyghboure, to whome he ought neuertheleſſe to ſuccoure and releue in mete and drynke and clothynge,

The offyce ⁊ duetie of a p̃acher.

We ought to be aſſured yͭ we preache no thyng but goddes word. The holy ſcrypture.

and in farre ſmaller thynges. But yet he addeth this thynge expreſly, that the prophet ſhulde here the worde of goddes mouth leaſte he myght elles preache his owne worde, or elles any other worde of man. Nowe we haue none other worde, then the ſcryptures of god: and therfore by theſe all wycked men are to be rebuked/neyther can it helpe them thoughe, they wolde make this cauyllacyon, and ſaye that this afore reherſed place of the ſcrypture dothe not ſpeake of great eſtates and lordes, but onelye of the poore and lowe cōmonaltie: for in as moche as it dothe expreſſe no maner of perſon, it is a playne and a neceſſarye concluſyon, that this ſayde place is to be vnderſtanded alſo of greate eſtates. For it ſpeaketh generallye

lye of wycked men/whether they be great, or ſmalle, and what maner ones ſoeuer they be. ¶ The worde of god hathe noo reſpecte or regarde vnto one perſone, more then an other. For it is aboue all perſones, and it apperteyneth egallye vnto all maner perſones. For euen Ezechyell hym ſelfe, althoughe he was of lowe degree: yet that notwithſtandynge he was ſente to preache vnto the whole people of Iſraell, amonge whome were Prynces, preeſtes, and many great eſtates So lykewyſe ſaythe. Mycheas alſo in the .vi. chapytre.

Ezechiel.

HErken you (ſayth he) what the lorde ſayth/ Aryſe and ſtrayne thy ſelfe in Iudgemente agaynſt the mountaynes, and let the hylles here thy voyce, lette

“ the mountaynes and the ſtronge
“ foundamẽtes of the earthe here
“ the iudgement of ẏ loꝛde, foꝛ the
“ iudgemente of the loꝛde is with
“ his people, and Iſraell ſhall be
“ iudged.

Moũtaynes.

WHo are thoſe moũtaynes, and the foundamentes ⁊ the grounde warkes of yͤ earthe vnto which he cõmaundeth hym to pꝛeache: here he dothe gyue cõmaũdement and charge, that the Jugement of god and the woꝛde of the loꝛde ſhuld be ſhewed not to the people onely, but to yͤ heddes ⁊ rulers amonge the people.

The pꝛophettes.

IN lyke maner all yͤ reſydue of the Pꝛophettes, in thoſe places where they are moſte vehement and moſt bolde and free in rebukynge, and do moſte ryſe vp with thoſe tragycall affeccyons, for the moſte parte they doo touche and moſte ſharply reproue not the pore cõmynaltie, nor the raſcal ſorte, but the hygh toppes/that is to ſay, kynges, prynces, the preſtes, & thoſe that were moſt cõnynge and moſte noble amonge the people, as theyr owne wrytynges do wytneſſe and beare recorde ſuffycyently, thoughe I ſpeake neuer a worde. So alſo dyd yͤ lorde ſaye vnto hieremy in the fyrſte chapytre.

> LO I haue put my wordes i »
> thy mouthe: beholde I haue »
> ſette the to daye ouer nacyons & »
> kyngdomes / For I haue ordey= »
> ned and made the to daye to be »
> as a fenced Cytie, and a pyller of »
> yron, and a walle of braſſe, to the »
> kynges of Juda, to the prynces »

„ and rulers of it / and to the preeſtes,
„ ⁊ to all the people. And they
„ ſhall make warre agaynſt the,
„ but they ſhall not preuayle agaynſt
„ the: for I am with the, ſayth
„ the lorde to delyuer the.

Hieremy. NOwe this hieremy as tou-
chynge to his perſonage
⁊ eſtate, was farre vndre
kynges, prynces, ⁊ preſtꝭ / A man
vtterlye contempte and abiecte /
borne in a pore lytle Towne cal-
Anathot. led Anathot: and yet all this not
withſtandynge, he was ſent by
god to preache the worde of the
lorde, and to be a comptroller o-
uer all men, and agaynſte all the
hygheſt eſtates and hed offycers
⁊ rulers of the people. Beſydes
this, Chryſte hym ſelfe, as he is
Chryſte. deſcrybed in the goſpell, was a
verye cõtemptyble, an abiecte, ⁊
a lowe perſonage in the ſyght of
the

the worlde, without any hyghe power or empyre and lordſhyp at all. Nowe I pray you, whome dyd he muſte pryncypally rebuke? what other perſones dyd he reproue then onely the chyefe preſtes, the ſcrybes, and the pharyſeys? & to be ſhorte, who ſoeuer were great & hygh in dygnytie & auctorytie. And in ſo doynge, he wold be an example vnto all preachers, that they ſhuld boldely & without any fere rebuke yͤ great & hyghe hedes amonge yͤ people, when they do worke againſt god because both ſaluacyon & perdycyon reſteth moſte in the hedes/ why ſhulde we then folowe yͤ folyſſhe. furyous & mad lawes of the byſſhop of Rome, agaynſt yͤ exãple of chryſt & of al yͤ prophetꝭ Why (I ſaye) ſhulde we ſpare & forbeare thoſe great lordꝭ ſpũall.

wherto ſhulde it auayle to chyde and rebuke the cōmon people: yf we do ouerhyppe and loke beſydes the prynces & rulers of the people? For there coulde neuer ſo moche vyce and ſynne be plucked vp by pure ſyncere, and fro teachyng, and bolde preachynge of the goſpel: as they ſhuld plante by theyr wycked & ſinyſtre cōmaundementes. For it ſhuld in this thyng playnly come to paſſe as Salomon ſayth in the fyrſte chapytre of Eccleſiaſt.

Where one buyldeth, and another deſtroyeth: what can be there but onely trauayle and laboure.

Yf we muſt nowe buylde amōge the people, it is neceſſary to reſyſte thoſe rulers, and thoſe heddes the auctours of humayne do ctryne, and deſtroyers/we ought therfore here to holde faſte with tothe and nayle, and to folowe, & toughly cleaue vnto that fre doctryne of the Apoſtle Paule in yͤ thyrde chappytre of yͤ fyrſte Epiſtle to Tymothe, whan he ſayth.

The doctryne of ſaynt Paule.

SUche as doo ſynne rebuke theym in the preſence of al men: that other maye ſtande in feare.

There Paule excepteth no man neyther of lowe eſtate and degre neyther yet of hyghe / And all though he dothe ſay that contra preſbiteros, yͭ is to ſaye agaynſt aged men or ſenyours (for ſuche were at that tyme gouernours & rulers in the churche) he ſhulde not receyue any accuſacion without two or thre wytneſſe: he dyd not for all that by thoſe wordes exclude and take away al maner rebukynge of theym, but rather dyd confyrme the reprouynge of theym / For after thoſe wordes whiche he ſpake of wytneſſe and recorde it foloweth immedyatlye. ⁂ ⁂ ⁂

“ They whiche do offende and
“ treſpaſſe, thou oughteſt to
“ rebuke theym openlye before all
“ men.

Preſbyter.

¶ But our byſchops haue interpreted & declared this worde preſbyter of preſtes, that is to wyt of theyr owne ſelues, where as the apoſtle doth meane of well aged and auncyent wyſe men: that is to wyt, that ſuch maner men are not to be accuſed lyghtly and for euery ſlayghte occaſyon, lykewyſe as he ſaythe alſo in the. v. chapytre.

Do not rebuke an olde man very ſharpely, but deſyre & praye hym as a father.

¶ For the apoſtle ſpeaketh not of ſuch byſſhops and preſtes, as are nowe in our tyme, whiche for the moſt parte ar of flowryſchynge age, & in a maner yonge men, to yͤ incerdible hurte & hynderaūce of yͤ churche : but he ſpeaketh of olde mē and auncyent in age, and well ſkylled in yͤ ſcryptures. For ſuche maner perſones it is mete and accordynge to handle reuerently: and yf they haue treſpaſſed and made a faulte in any thynge, they are to be deſyred & prayed that they wyll leaue it, and not to be ſharpely and ſore rebuked.

Ouer & beſydes this yͤ mynyſters of the worde of god ar pryn cypally bounden here vnto, that they ſhall more ſharply rebuke yͤ byſſhops and yͤ prymates of the Churche, then the worldly prynces and rulers, and that for many cauſes. Fyrſte becauſe that eccleſiaſtycall hyghnes and dignytie, as it is nowe, is not of god. For god dothe not a knowledge neyther electe this dyſgyſed and paynted deceytefull people, and thyſe childyſſhe, and in a maner counterfayte, & Nicolaicall byſſhops, for as moche as they doo neyther teache, neyther yet do execute any poynte belongynge to the offyce of a byſſhop. Secūdaryly theſe ſhadowes of byſſhops haue not ben cōſtytuted by men, but they haue exalted theyr own ſelues, & they haue catched vnto them ſelues empyre, domynyon, & lordſhyps agaynſt bothe god and

The preachers oughte moche rather to rebuke the ſpyrytuall heddes, then the tēporal, for dyuerſe iuſt cauſes.

Nicolaicall byſſhops, I wene he meane yͤ byſſhops made of chyldren at ſaynte Nicholas tyme.

and men, agaynſt reaſon, cōmen ſence or iudgement, after the nature and proprietie of tyrauntes, whiche do rule onely by yͤ wrath and great indygnacyon of god/

Tyrauntes.

The temporal or worldly gouernours and offycers are conſtytuted by the gracyous fauour and mercyfull ordynaunce of god, to the chaſtyſement and punyſſhement of euyl men, and to the proteccyon defence and mayntenaūce of good men. Beſydes this yͤ worldly gouernours, althoughe they do iniurye and wronge neuer ſo moche, and do vniuſtlye & wyckedly: yet for all that they do but onely hurte yͤ temporal goodes and yͤ body. But theſe great eſtates and prelates of the churche, yf they be not good and vertuous, and do promote and ſette forwardes the courſe of the worde of

Tempal pryncꝭ & gouernours.

Ro.13.

de of god vnfaynedly and with theyꝛ hertes : they are mere wolues. and moſte cruell murderers of ſoules. And it is moche lyke in euyll & wycked byſſhops, as yᵗ Sathan hym ſelfe hauynge a mytre on his hed, and rynges on his fingers, dyd ſytte in a chayꝛe and dyd rule the people. Wherfoꝛe euen the byſſhops alſo, whiche do not teache the pure woꝛde of god, ar no leſſe to be eſchewed then yͤ deuyll hym ſelf. Foꝛ wherſoeuer the woꝛde of god is not, there without doubte is nothynge elles but humayne erroure, mere doctryne of deuylles, and butcherye and ſlaughter of ſoules, Foꝛ yͤ conſcyences oꝛ ſoules, withoute the woꝛde of god can neyther lyue, neyther be delyuered from

The woꝛde of god.

red from the deuyll. But here I knowe well ynoughe, they wyll obiecte and ſaye, that it is ieoperdye, leaſte ſedycyon myghte be raysed vp agaynſt thoſe byſchoppes and prelates of the Churche Loo I make anſwere, ſhall the worde of god (I beſeche you) for this youre fayned obieccyon be neglected? and ſhall therfore the whole people peryſche? And is it (I praye you) ryght and conuenyent, that all ſoules ſhulde perpetuallye peryſche, and be ſlayne, that the temperall and moſte vayne pompe of ſuche men myghte be preſerued and mayntayned, and myghte endure and contynue in her peace and quyetneſſe? Naye, it were better (for ſpyrytuall harmes are moſte to be wayede) that ſyxe hondreth tymes all the byſſhoppes ſhulde peryſſhe for euer in theyr pryde and dygnytie, & that all the churches collegiate, and all monasteryes were plucked vp by the rootes/were ouerthrowen and vtterlye deſtroyed (ſo it were done by the auctoryte of the hygher powers, then that one ſoule ſhuld peryſſhe/becauſe I wyll not in the meane ſeaſon, ſaye that infynyte ſoules, yea that all ſoules ſhall peryſſhe for any thynge that ſuche as they do, I praye you tell me, what profyte cōmeth of many of the byſſhoppes that nowe are, or wherfore ſerue they, but onely to lyue in voluptuouſnes and pleaſures, & to play the ryotours & wantons of other mens labour & ſwete, and in the meane ſeaſon with moche greuous thretenynges & with dreadefull feares

I meane noo true byſſhops.

The profyte that cōmeth of oure byſſhops.

res, to condempne, to hyſſe oute, to caſt out, and to warre agaynſt the worde of god. Good mē they take excedynge great thought & care for theym ſelues, and with meruaylous great vnquyetneſſe of mynde feare and drede ſedycyons in yͤ temporall cōmen weale but as for the deathe of ſoules, beynge therof all careles, & without any maner feare or vnquyetnes of mynde, they do neglecte, and paſſe nothynge vpon it. I beſeche yͤ good reader, are not theſe goodly wyſe, and excedynge bolde and manly herdes men of the Churche. yf they dyd receyue the worde of god and of truthe, and dydde pryncypallye ſearche for the lyfe and ſauegarde of ſoules 2.cor.1. then the god (as yͤ apoſtle ſayth) of pacyence, and of comforte and hope wolde be with theym, that they ſhuld not nede to feare any ſedycions or rysynges of the people / whiche is but theyr craftye cloked excuſe, to blynde the iyes of the prynces. But in as moche as they lyke deafe ſerpentes ſtoppynge theyr eares, woll not here the worde of god, but (ſuche is theyr furye and madnes) doo rage agaynſt it with excomunycacyons, curſynges, impryſonemētes with the ſwerde, and fynally with fyre. I beſeche you what other thyng do they (as concernynge theyr parte / with this theyr extreme woodnes, then (which god defende (euen wyll inly prouoke that there ſhulde ryſe vp a verye great ſedycion, and that ſome certayne tempeſt & ſtorme ſhuld violently & ſodaynly come vpon thē which ſhuld rydde them at ones out of the worlde. And ſurely yf

Pſalmo. 57. deafe ſerpentes.

any ſuche thyng dyd chaunce vnto theym, yet were they noughte elles but to be laughed ⁊ ſcorned as wyſdome ſaythe in the fyrſte chappytre of the prouerbes.

BEcauſe I haue called ⁊ you „
haue refuſed to com, I haue „
ſtretched forth my hande, ⁊ there „
was none of you yͭ wolde loke to „
me, ⁊ you haue deſpyſed all my „
coūſayl, ⁊ haue ſet at nought my „
rebukynges: I alſo wyll laughe „
in your deſtruccyon, and I wyll „
mocke ⁊ ſcorne, when that thynge, „
whiche you dyd feare, ſhal be „
chaunced ⁊ cōmen vnto you. „

THe worde of god dothe not ſtyrre or rayſe vp ſedycyōs and ſtryues: but the ſtubburne and obynat dyſobedyence of them whiche do rage agaynſt it is the cauſe that trouble and ſedycyon is ſtyrred vp amonge the people

They yͭ reſyſt the worde of god be ſedycyous perſones.

people/and that then by ſuche ſedycyons that thynge ſhuld happen vnto theym whiche they had deſerued through theyr owne vnbelefe and frowardnes and wycked blyndnes. For who ſoeuer receyueth yͤ worde of god, that mā rayſeth vp no maner ſedycyons at all, albeit that he dothe no longer feare thoſe vayne bugges, neyther doth worſhyp thoſe epiſcopall puppettes, nowe ſyns yͭ he doth knowe the worde of god And becauſe that men do not feare & reuerence theyr vayne ymaginacions as here tofore they haue done, that ſame is the thynge yf I be not begyled, whiche they do call ſedycyons, and this is the thynge, that thoſe perſones doo ſo greatly feare, whiche haue hytherto ſuffred theym ſelues to be worſhipped and feared lyke goddes,

what the Byſſhpos call Sedycyoh.

des,as though they had ben true byſſhoppes or true herdes men of the Churche. And yf any man do rayſe vp ſedycyons or warre, that man abuſeth the worde of god to his owne affeccyons, and to his owne luſte and appetyte. For the worde of Chryſte or the worde of god dothe neuer cauſe no ſtrife or trouble bodely: but to wycked mē, and namely vnto tyrauntes it doth oftentymes manace and ſhewe before bataylles and boldely deſtruccyons to enſue, as it appereth in the bokes of yͤ ꝓphetes/But the ſayd worde doth delyuer by lytle and lytle the ſoules from the bondes of tyrauntes, that they may be deſpyſed: whiche is of all other yͤ moſt myghtye and ſtrongeſt remedye to breake & ouercome the tyrāny of them. For what ſoeuer thynge

Sedycyō is agaiſt the worde of god.

begynneth to be lytle ſet by, ⁊ is deſpyſed in the hertes of men, it nedeth not to go about wᵗ great myght ⁊ power to deſtroy ẏ thynge. For it is fallen euen all redye ⁊ can not ſtande nor cōtynue longe, as it is ſayd in the.ix.pſalme.
9.pſalme. So lykewyſe this people of viſures nedeth none other deſtruccyon then onely ẏ it be diſcouered ⁊
Laruaꝝ. openly ſhewed, ẏ it is dyſgyſed, a coūterfayte, ⁊ an hypocrytal people. For this thing ones knowen they begyn to be lytle regarded amonge all men, ⁊ are forſaken. But we wyll here vſe a certayne playne ⁊ famylyare example. In
The byſſhoppes mytre. the olde tyme the biſſhops mytre was a certayne myſtycall ſygne ⁊ token. The two hornes in the toppe of it dyd ſygnyfye the two teſtamentes, the olde ⁊ the newe, whiche the byſſhops dyd beare in the toppe of his mynde, ẏ is to

ſay in his vnderſtandynge / ⁊ he was cũnynge ⁊ well ſkylled in yͤ holy ſcryptures as ſaynt Paule cõmaundeth in the fyꝛſte epyſtle to Tymothe. And the two fyllettes oꝛ labelles hangynge downe behynde at his backe, dyd betoken the offyce of pꝛeachynge, by whiche he dyd frely ⁊ boldly pꝛonounce ⁊ declare the ſcrypture of both teſtamentꝫ amonge the people, and goynge hym ſelfe befoꝛe theym by holy ⁊ pure honeſt maner of lyuynge, dyd teache them to coũterfayte ⁊ folow hym. But now a dayes when we do ſe yͭ byſſhops wearyng thoſe cappes wͭ hoꝛnes, I beſeche yͧ what ſhall they ſignyfy. There are certayne mery concepted felowes, whiche do ſuppoſe yͭ the two hoꝛnes doo betokẽ yͭ a biſſhop ought to be lerned i yͤ ſcripturꝫ of both teſtamẽtꝫ

The fyllettes oꝛ labelles of the mytre.

but the two fyllettes hangynge ſo at al auentures behynde theyr backe, they do thynke to ſygnyfy contrary wyſe, that they are excedyngly ygnoraũt in bothe, & not ſo moche as to be wyllynge to learne theym. For the pryncypall vertue whiche appereth & moſte ſheweth it ſelfe in our byſſhops & cardynalles is in a maner this that they ar earthen pottes, and ſcalpes or ſculles without brayne or wytte, excedynge dulle and inſenſyble, and ſo ygnoraũt that one wolde wondre at it/ in ſo moche that in theſe bytter and myſecable tymes of the decretalles, it hath begonne to be accompted a great ſhame & rebuke, for a byſſhop to ſtody in the Bible, & not without a cauſe apduẽture. For what ſhulde ſo great a prynce & lorde vexe and trouble hym ſelfe with

The tymes of decretalles.

with theſe ſo paynfull cares, whiche (yf I be not begyled) do hurte both the hed and alſo remēbraunce: ſeynge that there are on euery ſyde lymoturs ynough, & freers, and relygyous men ynoughe on euery ſyde, whiche may be hyred euen for a lofe of brede, to declare many ſuche good thynges out of the bible to hym, eyther whyles he ſytteth at dyner, or elles whyles he lyeth i his bedde, and ſo with readynge of ſuche holye wrytte may bryng the reuerende & holy father a ſlepe / But nowe in good ſadneſſe, I beſeche you what other thynge are our byſſhops, in comparyſon then mere viſures & ſuche maner byſſhops in all poyntes, as chyldren do make whē they playe: onely becauſe they can ſkylle to ſpyncle dumbe ſtones, (yf god be pleaſed) & with frankenſence caſt in to the ſenſer to make ſmokes, ⁊ ſelle ſmokes/ that is to wyt ỹ them ſelues beynge nought els but ſtockꝭ ⁊ trees, may alſo conſecrate and halowe trees ⁊ ſtockꝭ, ⁊ that them ſelues beynge none other thynge then dumbe ſtones, maye baptyze ſtones. But they do all theſe thynges with hygh coũtenaunce ⁊ ſolempne ceremonyes / ⁊ becauſe els peraduenture they ſhuld fynde none ỹ wold gyue them the lokyng on of theſe thyngꝭ: they do hyre them with .xl. dayes of ꝑdon (no lytle rewarde god knoweth) as though they were about to cõſecrate or halowe churches or alters vnto god / And it is verye wel done forſorth, for where ſhulde god els fynde a dwellyng place? or whether coulde he els flee for ſuccour, yf the deuyll dyd chaſe hym?

ſe hym: (yf I may ſay ſo(excepte theſe ꝓfytable men, & theſe chaſt & holy byſſhops dyd water thoſe dumbe ſtones, & theſe dūbe walles with certayn holy droppes of wat, & except they dyd delyte his noſethrylles wͭ ſwet fumes & pleſaūt ſmelles. And doubtles they do al thyngꝭ aſwel as can be, according to that yͤ becōmeth theyr perſones. For in lyke maner in theſe holye dayes (whiche maye well be called Feſta lupcalia) afore the hungrye faſtynge dayes we do make theſe men kynges, & for a ſporte and playe cloth them in purple & golde & make theym coūterfayte byſſhops/ whiche in very dede ar nothyng els but raſcalles ydyotes & boyes. & albeit there is no doubt yͭ thoſe earneſt offices & workes belōgyng vnto very byſſhops, ſuch as the apoſtle deſcrybeth & wylleth thē to be,

He meaneth from Chryſten mas to Lent.

are not able to be counterfayted of chyldren: yet not withſtādyng here it maye be a great doubte, whether of them dothe counterfayte yͤ other, the byſſhoppes the boyes, or the boyes the byſſhops

Nowe whiche is the true Image & forme of a byſſhop, the apoſtle Paule doth deſcrybe in yͤ thyrde chapytre of the fyrſte epyſtle to Tymothe.

The image of a true byſſhop.

Yf any man deſyre the offyce of
a byſſhoppe or an ouerſeer, he
doth deſyre an honeſte worke/ a
“ byſſhop therfore ought to be vnreprouable,
“ yͤ huſband of one wyfe,
“ watchefull or dylygent, ſobre
“ dyſcrete and lowlye / A keper of
“ hoſpytalytie / apte to teache / no
“ dronkarde/ no fyghter/ not dyſyrouſe
“ of fylthy lucre/ but egall &
indyferēt

indyfferent, hatynge fyghtynge; ,,
abhorrynge couetouſnes, and a ,,
mã which ruleth his owne houſe ,,
well, and whiche hathe his chyldren ,,
in ſubieccyon and obedyence ,,
with all reuerence. For yf it be ,,
ſo that a mã can not ſkylle to rule ,,
his owne howſe: howe ſhall yͤ ,,
man ordre the churche of god? he ,,
muſt be no nouyce newly entred ,,
in to the Chryſten relygyon, leaſte ,,
he be puffed vp with pryde, & ,,
do falle in to condempnacyon of ,,
the euyll ſpeaker / he muſte alſo ,,
haue good reporte amonge ſtraungers ,,
and the infydeles, leaſte he ,,
do falle in to rebuke, and in to yͤ ,,
ſnare of the euyll ſpeaker. ,,

The offyce of a biſſhop.

Conſydre now whether it be not a good worke, to deſyre the offyce of a byſſhop, in whiche are ſo many excellent and goodly lye vertues. Saynt Paule wyll not a biſſhop to be a nouyce, whiche hath lately come to the fayth or whiche is lytle cōfyrmed and eſtablyſſhed in the fayth: leaſte yͤ bakbyter ⁊ euyll tonged perſone myght haue occaſyon to iudge ⁊ ſaye/ Se what maner foole they haue made ruler ⁊ ouerſeer of ſo great thynges. But he wylleth hym to be a man hauyng experyence, wel ſkylled, ſadde ⁊ wyſe, ſo that his euyll wyllers may be aſhamed to ſpeke euyll, yea ⁊ alſo can not ſpeke euyll or iudge euyl of hym/ lykwyſe alſo he muſt haue a good reporte euen of yͤ Infydelles, ⁊ he muſt not be of vyle reputacyon not ſo moch as euen amonge them: for els he ſhall b laughed to ſcorne of theym, ⁊ he ſhall be bounden ⁊ holden in on euery ſyde, as it were with a rope pe. that he may neyter boldly exhorte, nor ſay any thynge, nor rebuke any thynge, for aſmoche as there are in hym ſelfe alſo many thynges, whiche maye be tourned to his reproche, and rebuke whiche thynge ſhulde be bothe a great ſclaundre to all the whole congregacyon, and alſo a great cauſe of offenſyon to the infydelles. For in the tyme of the apoſtle the Chryſten men were mengled amonge hethen men.

WHerfore it was neceſſarye, that the lyfe of them, & namely of ẏ byſſhops ſhuld be vnreprouable cõmendable, & on euery ſyde pure & faultles. So lykewyſe he ſayth vnto Tymothe in the fyrſte chapytre.

FOr this cauſe I left ẏ i Crete or Cãdy, ẏ thou ſhuldeſt „
conty-

“ contynue and holde on to amen-
“ de ſuche thynges as are wantyn
“ ge, and that thou ſhuldeſt ordey-
“ ne preeſtes in euery towne, as I
“ appoynted vnto the. yf any man
“ be vnculpable, the huſbande of
“ one wyfe, hauyng faythfull chyl
“ dren and not ſkaundred of ryot,
“ nor ſturdy and vnruly. For a byſ
“ ſhop muſt be fautles, as beynge
“ the mynyſtre of god/not ſtubbur
“ ne ⁊ ſelfe wylled/ not angrye/no
“ dronkarde/no fyghter, not gyuē
“ to fylthy lucre/ but harberfull/a
“ louer of good thynges, ſobre, ry-
“ ghtuous, holy, temperate, tough
“ ly cleuyng vnto that true worde
“ whiche is accordynge to doctry-
“ ne that he may be able alſo to ex-
“ horte by holſome doctryne, and
“ to confute and dyſproue theym,
“ that do ſay agaynſt it.

LO theſe at the faſyons and vertues belongynge vnto true Chryſten byſſhops, of whiche ſorte there ought to haue ben in euery Cytie or comynaltie at the leaſte one, or two, after as neceſſytie and nede dyd requyre/ But what ſay you nowe: ſeynge that there is a certayne newe faſyon, yea and a more gentle and noble example (yf god be pleaſed) of byſſhops ſhewed nowe a dayes, ſhulde theſe olde maners and qualyties, wherof the apoſtle dothe ſpeake, and whiche are worne out of vſe many yeres agoo, ſhulde they (I ſaye) belonge vnto theſe byſſhops? There are in the papyſticall byſſhops (yf I be not begyled) farre better faſyons and vertues, wherof leaſte any man myght hereafter deſyre a reherſall: I ſhall reherſe as many ny of theym as I can call to remembraũce, and they are cõmenly ſuche as here foloweth.

The image & propreties of a papyſtyſtycal byſſhop.

THe fyrſte propryetie chyefly belongyng vnto theym is, to be excedyngly ignoraũt, & without any maner ꝑceyuyng of all learnynge to flee & eſchewe matrymony or wedlocke, and inſtede of it to kepe as many harlottes as they lyſte / to beare in theyr handes a ſhepehoke of ſyluer bounde about with a towell, to weare a mytre with hornes / to go after the maner of pageauntꝭ in proceſſyõs / to haue theyr crowne brode ſhauen / to haue many tytles & townes & a verye large domynyon vnder theyr ſpryncle, (for I wyll vſe theyr owne tearme) to leade aboute with a certayne pompe goodly palfrayes, and that a great many of them, after

aſꝑſio.

the maner of one tryumphynge, to be proude with all maner pompe ⁊ gorgyouſnes after yͤ courte facyon/to kepe offycyalles/ that is to ſay, certayne robbers ⁊ pyllers of prouynces, ⁊ tormētours of pore men/to kyll ſoules by tyranny ⁊ excōicacyons/⁊ (whiche thynge J had almoſt forgotten) to paynte ⁊ ſet vp in euery place the armes of theyr kynned rampyng lyons, ⁊ ſuche other monumētes, with a ſhepehoke ⁊ a byſſhops croſſe put therunto to ſet forth theyr fyngers to the ſhewe, decked with goodly ryngꝭ of golde to arme theyr hādes wͭ purple gloues, leſte els they myght be a colde in the myddes of theyr ceremonyes / to ſpryncle dombe ſtones ⁊ ſtockes in the churches, hauig a ladder ſet to euery wal) wͭ J wot not what war to cōfyrme, chyldren by annoyntynge theym with oyle/and to gyue the godfathers and godmothers, namely yf they be well fauoured yonge women, a clappe with theyr holy hande gentyly on the one cheke, as it were to make them take better hede vnto ſo holy thingſ: & yet neuertheleſſe to do all this thyng kepynge the comelynes belõgynge to a byſchop, not with geſture (leaſte any folyſche man myght iudge ſo) of ſtage players, leaſte forthwith yͤ hole multytude myghte peraduenture with vnmete laughter for that ſeaſon, trouble and let the holy buſynes. And a thouſãde other ſuch maner moſt goodly faſyons & vertues farre more cõmendable and fauourable, then are thoſe mencyoned of ſaynt Paule/in our byſchoppes: whiche yͤ apoſtle eyther forgat to reherſe, or at the leaſte wyſe neuer knewe of theym, beynge yet for all that verye neceſſary for to be founde out by the moſte holy lorde and father the Pope. But thoughe the apoſtle Paules remembraunce dyd neuer ſomoche fayle hym there, yet what maner lyfe they doo leade vndre thoſe goodlye forked mytres, palles, ſcepters, gloues, rynges, and ſuche other, he dyd nothynge at all forgette, when he ſayth in the ſecõde epyſtle to Tymothe, and in the thyrde chapytre.

Larue mundi.

> AND this thyng knowe thou that in the laſte dayes ſhall come ieoperdous tymes/for there ſhall be men ẏ ſhall loue theyr owne ſelues, couetous, ſtately & dyſdaynefull/ proude, euyll tonged/dyſobedyent to theyr paren-

“ tes, vnkynde, wycked/ withoute
“ affeccyon/falſe accuſers. ryotoures/
“ cruel deſpyſers of good mē/
“ traytours/raſſhe and haſty, puffed
“ vp with pꝛyde / the louers
“ of pleaſures, rather then the louers
“ of god/hauynge yͤ ſemblaūce
“ and apparaūce of vertue and
“ godlynes, but denyenge the vertue
“ and power therof/ thoſe that
“ are ſuche, do thou abhoꝛre.

Peter.

Lo here (yf I be not vtterly begyled) Paule hath deſcrybed & woꝛkemanly ſet foꝛthe our ydle & vnlearned byſſhops with theyꝛ owne mete colours. And wͭ the ſame colours the apoſtle Peter alſo (whoſe ſucceſſoures the pope boſteth hym ſelf to be) doth paynte theym and ſet theym out to the iye, in the ſeconde chapytre of his ſeconde epyſtle.

There were alſo falſe prophe ,,
tes amonge the people, lyke ,,
wyſe as there ſhall be amonge ,,
you falſe teachers, whiche ſhall ,,
pryuely brynge in peruycyous & ,,
myſcheuous ſectꝭ, euen renyeng ,,
the Lorde whiche hathe bought ,,
theym, ſeachynge vnto them ſel= ,,
ues haſty deſtruccion, and many ,,
ſhall folowe theyr deadely way= ,,
es, by whome the waye of truthe ,,
ſhall be euyll ſpoken of and tho= ,,
rughe couetouſnes with counter ,,
fayte wordꝭ they ſhal make mar ,,
chaundyſe of you.

These wordes can not be vnderſtanded any other wyſe then of yͤ byſchops & of yͤ great p̄latꝭ & rulers of yͤ church. For we do ſe, howe they haue deuyſed dyuerſe ſectꝭ, dyuerſe orders, dyuerſe facyons, & haue brought them in to the worlde contrarye to the doctryne of Chryſte ⁊ of the goſpell / whiche thynges euery one of them beynge cleane out of the ryght and the hyghe waye of the chryſten fayth, do preſcrybe and teache peculyer workes and faſyons of lyuynge, by whiche the knowledge of Chryſte is put away ⁊ quenched, and chryſt hym ſelfe, (whome onely the apoſtle Paule dothe well nere in euery ſyllabe teche vnto vs) is denyed, whiche Chryſte alone for all that dyd redeme vs. For thoſe good holy men do teache, that we are iuſtyfyed by workes, and by the endeuermentes of free wyll: where as in verye dede onely Chryſt hath ben made vnto vs ryghtuouſnes, and ſanctifycacyon, and redempcyō. i. Cor. i. beſydes this they do with euyll wordes ⁊ blaſphemyes

Chryſte.

phemyes rayle and ſpeaketh agaynſt the way of the goſpel and of the truthe, neyther wyll they ſuffre theyr errours to be dyſproued, or them ſelues to be taughte that onely Chryſte is our helthe, our lyfe, and our ryghtuouſnes/ Agayne this is more euydente, then that it nedeth any probacyons, howe they all beynge blynded and made ſtarke madde thorough couetouſnes, do dyrecte al theyr whole doctryne vnto this ende, that all thynges ſhulde be gyuen vnto them ſelues alone/ that temples and monaſteryes, & cathedrall churches collegyate, myght be buylded / and that we ſhuld ſuffre theym to be ryche, to be well monyed, and to haue habundaũce of all maner thynges And theſe are lyes & gyles, and theſe are ỹ deceytes, whiche they do ſo couer and cloke, with the coloure of holy lyfe, and of ſpyrytuall eſtate: and in verye dede they do denye yͤ vertue and power of true vertue and godly lyuynge. And yet for all this in the meane ſeaſon euery man dothe ſo gyue vnto them, as though they were ſuche as dydde lyue in holy lyfe, when in very dede it is nothyng but deceyte and mere hypocryſy, & theſe gylefull ſymulacion without faythe. So that ſaynt Peter dyd not without a cauſe ſay, nay men ſhall folowe the errours of theym.

“ BEſydes this ſaynt Peter ſa-
“ yth, whoſe iudgemēt is not
“ ſlowe of cōmynge, and theyr vt-
“ ter deſtruccyon dothe not ſlepe.
“ For yf god dyd not ſpare the aū-
“ gelles whiche had offended, but

aun/gelles

dyd caſte theym downe in to hell ,,
bounden with chaynes of darkenes ,,
to be kept there vnto the iudgemēt, ,,
neyther dyd ſpare ẙ worlde ,,
in olde tyme, but ſaued Noe ẙ ,, Noe.
eyght preacher of ryghtuouſnes ,,
and brought in a floode ouer the ,,
worlde of wycked men/ and dyd ,,
brynge the Cyties of Sodome & ,,
Gomorre in to aſſhes, & dyd con ,,
dempne them with vtter deſtruc ,,
cyon, and dyd make theym an ex ,,
ample vnto all thoſe ẙ afterwar- ,,
des ſhuld worke wyckedly. And ,,
dydde delyuer ryghtuous Loth ,,
which loth was oppreſſed of the ,,
wycked men by theyr vncleane & ,,
Lecherous conuerſacyon. For ,,
he beynge ryghtuous bothe in ſe ,,
ynge and hearynge, whenne he ,,
dwelled amonge theym, he dyd ,,
daylye vexe his ryghtuouſe ſou- ,,
le with theyr wycked dedes. ,,

„ The lorde knoweth howe to delyuer
„ good & vertuous men out
„ of temptacion, and howe to kepe
„ the vnryghtuous perſones vnto
„ the daye of iudgement for to be
„ punyſſhed/namely ſuche as folowyng
„ the fleſſhe do walke in the
„ concupyſcence, & luſte of vnclennes
„ & do deſpyſe the gouernours
„ & rulers, beynge preſumptuous,
„ ſtubburne, & whiche do not feare
„ to rayle and ſpeake euyl wordes
„ on theym whiche are in hygh auctoryte.

THe apoſtle here in theſe moſte vehement and ſore wordes, ſetteth forth vnto thoſe gret eſtates and lordes thre terryble and dreadfull examples/ that is to wytte of the aungelles, of the worlde, and of Sodome. But al theſe thynges are in vayne ſhewed and preached vnto theym. Our delicate byſchoppes do not beleue that this was ſpoken of theym, and beſydes that they do not rede nor heare theſe thinges.

¶ But I beſeche yͤ good reader marke here, howe well yͤ wordes of Peter doo agree with Paule, when he dyſcrybeth theyr fylthy & vnclene lyf. For where he ſaith preſumptuous ſtubburne: there are ſkantly any men, to whome thoſe wordes do ſoner agee. For it is they, whiche of all men doo moſt ſet by them ſelues, in ſo moche that they do deſpyſe al worldly rulers and offycers, and what ſoeuer other perſone is of hyghe dygnytie & auctorytie in worlde, in comparyſon of them ſelues, & do alſo rayle vpon theym & ſpeake opprobrious wordes agaynſt theym, For the Pope hath many

yeres

The tyrãny of the Pope.

yeres ago taken this mõſtruous tyranny vnto hym ſelfe, that he hathe not ben affrayde to treade kynges & prynces vnder his fete to depoſe them/to excõmunycate theym / to curſe theym vnto the. iiii.v.and.vi.generacion/and after theyr owne pleaſure to exercyſe all thinges whiche any maner of way what ſoeuer it be may belonge & helpe vnto extreme and wonderfull tyranny, none otherwyſe then yf the prynces & gouernours were ſwyne or els dogges Notwithſtãdynge that the ſcrypture wylleth al men to be ſubiect and obedyent vnto the prynces & gouernours for yͤ publyke peace and tranquylytie of this lyfe, namely for as moche as they are cõſtytuted and ordeyned to ſerue yͤ dyuyne ordynaũce as mynyſters of the ſwerde. And yet neuertheles there are founde ſome kyngꝭ and prynces ſo faynte herted, & of ſo lytle manfulnes and courage, that they doo feare theſe harmeles thundres and vayne curſynge, and do humbly beſeche & optayne the extreme and vttermoſte folyſſhenes and inſenſybylytie that they maye be blyſſed agayne (for ſo they call it) of the Pope I wot not with what charmes or coniuracyons and wordes appoynted for the ſame purpoſe onely: that is to wytte to the ende that that cruell preſumpcyon, and that wonderfull tyranny of his (as thoughe he were not madde ynough of his own ſwynge) myghte by the reaſon hereof the ſooner gather power & ſtrengthe, and with thoſe moſte vayne deceytes of curſynges myght deceyue all the whole worlde.

Beſydes this the byſchoppes do ſtoutely and manfully helpe the Pope, and ſo do all the great lordes belongynge to the Pope / & they be in verye dede yͤ deſpyſers of all rulers & poteſtates, whiche wyll in no wyſe be ſubiect to any maner hyghe power, neyther in body neyther in goodes, but onely they beynge preſumptuous & ſtubburue and more then woode do on euery ſyde make buſynes & rage to excõmunycate and curſe all kynges, and prynces, and other whiche are in auctorytie.

¶ Tell me I beſeche you, hathe not oure Peter here largely and playnly touched our moſte delycate & tendre byſchops? I praye you of what other perſones may theſe wordes be vnderſtanded, that they are not ſubiectꝭ nor obedyent vnto the rulers? that they ſpeake euyll of kynges and prynces? bryefly that beyng preſumptuous & ſtubburne they do feare no man? is it not openly knowen to the worlde, who they be, that cōmytte theſe lewde dedes? Beſydes this Peter ſayth.

When the aungelles theym 1.petri.2.
ſelues whiche are greater ,,
in myght & power do not receyue ,,
of the lorde iudgemēt with euyll ,,
wordes agaynſt theym ſelues. ,,
But theſe perſones as brute beaſtes ,,
naturally ordeyned to be taken ,,
& deſtroyed, ſpeakynge euyll ,,
of thoſe thynges whiche they vnderſtande ,,
not, ſhall peryſſhe in ,,
theyr owne deſtruccion, and ſhal ,,
receyue the rewarde of vnrightuouſnes: ,,
and they do accompte it ,,
a pleaſure, yf they do lyue delycyouſly/ ,,
they be ſpottes and fylthynes, ,,

> nes, whiche feaſtyng and banketynge togyther in theyꝛ erroures do play yͤ ryotours of your goodes hauynge theyꝛ iyes full of adulterye, and whiche can not ceaſe to ſynne, begylynge and alluryinge to ſynne vnſtable ſoules hauynge alſo theyꝛ hertes exercyſed with rauynes and extoꝛſyons. ∴

☞ ❧ ☜

Beholde howe vehemēt and ſoꝛe this excellent apoſtle is here, howe hote he is, howe he is kyndled, ⁊ howe he caſteth oute pure flambes of fyꝛe / J beſeche you, who are they which do lyue in pleaſures and ryotouſnes of other mens goodes? who (J ſay) are they whiche ſuppoſen it to be ſuffycyent to care onely foꝛ them ſelues and foꝛ thoſe thinges whiche

che do belonge vnto them ſelues Who be they, which do lyue (as Peter ſayth) lyke brute beaſtes? and whom no man hytherto durſte be bold to rebuke, yea or ones to admonyſſhe and tell theym of theyr defaltes/ I praye yͤ, nedeth this place any gloſe or declaracyon at all? Is it not openly & euydentlye knowen that byſſhoprykes, cathedrall Churches, monaſteryes, vnyuerſyties, in whiche holye ſcrypture is not ſyncerelye taughte pryncypallye before all thynges, are nothynge elles but a certayne vnſacyable and bottomles whyrlepole, whiche ſwallowen vp yͤ ryches of kynges, of prynces, of dukes, of erles, of the cõmon people, and to be ſhorte of all the worlde? Is it not euydent ynough, yͭ this ſorte of men haue come vnto theſe ſo great goodes and ryches, not by theyr owne induſtrye & laboure, but throughe other mênes folyſſhenes , and a certayne madnes of gyuyng vnto theym. They verely them ſelues (as they be naturally louers of them ſelues , and do ſtonde in theyr owne conceyte) wolde ſweare deapely, that theym ſelues are the moſte noble ſorte, and yͤ moſt fyne & pure floure of all the men that are in the whole worlde, and Peter yet for all yͤ calleth theym openly and playnly ſpottes, fylthes, and peſtylences. And theſe alſo ar they whiche do rayle and ſpeake opprobryous wordes agaynſt the truthe, & do condempne it wherof yet they be ignoraũt and haue no knowlege. For they beynge all togyther drenched in theyr humane, yea deuelyſhe opynyons, and in theyr moſte fylthy lyuynge, and beyng all togyther carnall and brutyſche are made inſenſyble, and vtterly partles & ignoraunt of fayth and of ghoſtly thynges. But yet for all that they do allure and begyle vnſtable ſoules with thoſe theyr intyſementes and pleaſures of ryches and honours. For hytherto they haue aſpyred vnto byſſhoprykes to benefyces, and to abbotſhyps and pryorſhyps, & haue panted for the loue of ydlenes and eaſe, and for yͤ hatred of yͤ holy croſſe, for the moſte parte, whiche in the floure of theyr youthe were moſt honeſt good and vertuous. For euen nowe a dayes alſo many folyſche and wycked fathers & mothers do brynge vp theyr ſones & theyr doughtes for the ſame purpoſe, that they ſhulde entre in to theſe maners of lyuynge, not ve-

The folyſſhenes of fathers & mothers

rely for the loue of god or of vertuous & good lyuynge, but onely that (as they call it) they maye be well prouyded for, and ſure of a lyuynge/ and that of other mēnes goodes they maye lyue ydely in all maner delycyouſnes and pleaſures / that is to wytte, that they nede not to get theyr lyuynge with theyr owne handes, and theyr breade or ſuſtenaunce with the ſwette of theyr face, vnto whiche thynge all men are bounden.

Gene. 3.

¶ Now they haue theyr herte exercyſed with couetouſnes and rauynes, as euery man perceyueth for they neuer make any ende of deuyſynge & fyndynge out craftes, and ſubtyleties: wherby they may catche vnto them ſelues the goodes of all the worlde. And to this byenge and ſellyng and gettynge of lucre, they do (whiche is abhomy-

Byenge & ſellyng

abhomynable) abuſe god, the ſacramentes, the maſſe, and all ſpyrytuall thynges though I paſſe ouer in the meane ſeaſon what thynges they do exhorte, and get from mē by vſurye, lyes, fraudes and gyles. But yf thou do aſke, who they be that haue ye full iyes of an adulteres without doubte the apoſtle here rebuketh ye moſt fylthye and a verye ſtrompettes lyfe, whiche they do lede. For euē likewyſe as an adultereſſe is paſſed all ſhame, & with full & wanton iyes loketh rounde aboute vpon euery man, beyng ſet forth & redy to ſerue the fleſſhely luſte of euery maner mā/ euen ſo ar they alſo without ſhame, moche lyke vnto an adultereſſe, whiche haue layde awaye ſhamefaſtnes for euer. For they ar gyuē al togyther vnto fylthy lechery, i which they

of ſpūall thynges.

An adulteres.

do lyue careles at lybertie, and without the rebukes of any man Beſydes this ſaynt Peter ſaith.

“ THey are the chyldren of ma
“ ledyccyon or curſynge, whi
“ che haue forſaken the right way
“ & gone a wronge waye, folowyn
“ ge the waye of Balaam the ſone
“ of Boſor, whiche loued yͤ rewar-
“ de of wyckednes, but he was re-
“ buked of his wyckednes. The ta
“ me dumbe beaſte ſpeakyng with
“ mans voyce dyd forbydde & lette
“ the madnes of yͤ prophete. Theſe
“ are fountaynes lackynge water,
“ and cloudes caryed aboute of a
“ tempeſt.

FOr lykewyſe, as Balaam was rebuked of yͤ Aſſe, euē ſo do: we ſe couetouſues to raygne amonge theym with ſo great madnes and vnſhamefaſtnes, that euen the vnleraned cõmon people do now begyn to cry agaynſt it, and herof hath taken vp a cõmen prouerbe, whiche is this. He is more couetous (ſaye they of a couetous perſone) then other preeſt or monke. Bryeſlye there is no man, which doth not for theyr couetouſnes moſte odyouſly ſpeake agaynſt theym, and gyue theym euyl wordes. But I praye you howe fearefull a thynge is this, yͤ Peter calleth theym openly the ſones of malediccyon Who els durſte call the Pope of Rome, & the byſſhops with theyr vnder offycers, a curſed people? Nowe peter yͭ ſo excellent apoſtle, yea and the holy ghoſt by Peter doth call theym, and doth curſe theym/ Who nowe wolde not be ſory and tremble in his herte, that euer he hath gyuen & boun-

The cõmon prouerbe.

de hym ſelf to this curſed kynde ⁊ maner of lyuynge: Oh I ſaye, who ſoeuer may let hym eſchewe lette hym eſchewe, nowe in theſe dayes, theſe maners of lyuyuge of preeſtes, ⁊ freers, and of ſuche other. Afterwardꝫ he doth agayne gaylye garnyſſhe yͤ byſſhops with theyr mete tytles. For what other thyng is meaned here by a fountayne without water, and a cloude without rayne: then by a byſſhop without mynyſtracyon of the worde of god: For this offyce lyeth vnto yͤ byſſhops charge, and yet they do not fulfyll it accordynglye/moche lyke as the drye and broken welles haue the name of a fountayne or welle, ⁊ do occupye the place of a welle, ⁊ yet for all that gyue no water at all. And the cloudes, which troubled with yͤ wynde are caryed ⁊ dryuen fro one place to another,

A fountayne wᵗoute water.

are

ar in dede in yͤ ayer in ſtede of very cloudꝭ: & yet they do not gyue ſomoch as one dꝛop of moyſture So lykewyſe our byſſhops alſo beyng toſſed wͭ the wynde of glory ar in dede in the hygh rowme of the very Apoſtles / but yet foꝛ all yͭ they be moued & dꝛyuen accoꝛdynge to all yͤ cogytacyons of yͤ deuyl / & they be greatly aduaũced in yͤ honoures & pleaſures of this woꝛld but they ſende downe no dꝛoppes of moyſture. They p̄che nothyng at al / wherfoꝛe ther is reſerued foꝛ them alſo ifernall darkenes foꝛ euermoꝛe. But yf yͧ wylt ſay vnto me howe can they be called foũtaynes wͭout water & cloudes wͭout rayne, i aſmoche as they do ynoughe & moꝛe then ynough fylle and replenyſſhe all the woꝛlde with theyꝛ teachynge and do on euery ſyde with lowde voyce ſpeake great thynges.

Peter maketh anſwere ⁊ graunteth that withoute doubte they do preache to moche, to the great hurte of all the worlde: and he ſayth furthermore.

> “FOr when they haue vehemently ſpoken proude wordes of vanytie, they begyle ⁊ allure men through luſtes of yͤ pleaſure of the fleſſhe, ſuch as were cleane eſcaped, ſuche as are in erroure, whyles they doo promyſe vnto them lybertie, and yet they are theym ſelues the bonde ſeruauntes of corrupcyon.

HEre he ſheweth the cauſe, why he doth compare ⁊ lyken theym to Balaam, and he deſcrybeth the nature of theyr doctryne. wherfore let vs loke vpon this ſomwhat ſtedfaſtlye ⁊ with

Balaam

good

Nume 24 et.31.

good aduyſement. Moyſes wryteth in the boke of Numeri in the xxiiii. and. xxxi. chapitres, howe that Balaam made mocyon to yͤ kyng Balach, he ſhuld ſet vp an Idolle called Baal peor and inſtytude and ordeyne ſacryfyces, in which certayne women & maydes ſhuld after the maner of cōmen women ſtonde forth redy to ſatyſfye the fleſſhely luſtes of all maner perſones, in the honoure of the god Baal/ & that he ſhulde prouoke the chyldren of Iſraell to Idolatrye and fornycacyon, and ſo by that meanes myghte brynge the wrathe and indygnacyon of god vpon theym / when he coulde by none other wayes ouercome, whoſe counſell kynge Balach dyd folowe & obey. Soo then the chyldren of Iſraell entyſed by the women of the madyanites,

nites, dyd ſacryfyce with theym to the Idolle Peor / ⁊ after that they had gyuē them ſelues moſte ſhamefully to lecherye and glotonye, they were deceyued with the flaterynge wordes and behauoure of yͤ women. wherfore god beynge dyſpleaſed ⁊ angrye, cauſed the prynces and rulers to be hāged agaynſt the ſonne, and he ſlewe. xxiiii. M. perſones. Lo yͤ author and begynner of this ſo great ⁊ abhominable ſynne was Balaam ſo great a prophete/Lo this greate offence cōmytted he, whiche not longe afore had preached ſo godly thyngꝭ. But for as moche as the apoſtle Peter doth referre and applye all theſe thynges vnto our byſſhops, lette vs nowe conſydre more largely of this mater. What maner Idolle baal peor Baal Peor was, the ſcrypture doth not ſo playnly declare, albe it that in the .xxi. chapytre of Ezechyell it doth ſomwhat touche of the wonderfull, and vnſacyable fleſſhely luſte of that ſpyꝛytuall adulteres / when it dothe moſte ſharpely rebuke her foꝛ that ſhe dyd deſyꝛe and luſte after the fleſſhe of hoꝛſes.

AND ſhe was made (ſayth he) with luſte to lye by theym, whoſe fleſſhe are as yͤ fleſſhe of Aſſes, ⁊ yͤ fluxe ⁊ yſſue of them as the fluxe oꝛ yſſue of hoꝛſes. Ezech.21.

AUthoꝛs do ſaye, yͭ this ſame Idolle was Pꝛiapus of the whiche mater all togyther, I had moche leuer holde my tonge then to ſpeke any thyng at al not but yͭ it myght be vttered pēned ⁊ ſpoken well ynoughe (ſo it were done wͭ honeſt ſhamefaſtnes ⁊ reuerēce were not foꝛ yͤ capcyouſnes of certayne ꝑſons whiche whē they cā fide aft theyꝛ lōg Pꝛiapus

poꝛyng

poryng and pryeng) no faulte or chalenge in the argumēt or matter, wyll be right glad otherwyſe to fynde ſome thynge, whiche (albeit vnworthely) they may with ſome fayned coloure of honeſte & vertuous pretens, depraue & calumpnyate. Therfore who ſo lyſteth to know more of the fylthie rytes and ceremonyes of this deteſtable Idolle priapus or Baal Peor, vſed at the matrimonye of honeſt matrones amonge yͤ gentyles before Chryſtes natyuytie, Let hym reſorte to a boke of. S. Auguſtynes, intytled De ciuitate dei. where the holy doctour, is not aſſhamed (for why ſhuld he) nomore thenne men neded to be nowe a dayes, yf the deuyll dyd not rage ſo ſore in his membres, to ſhewe the deteſtable ſacryfyce don vnto this abhominable god of

De ciuitate dei. lib.6.ca.9

fylthye lecherye and vnclennes/ Baal peor or Priapus. The whiche abhomynacion euery whytte notwithſtandynge, was done & cõmytted vndre yͤ cloked coloure of a ghyhe ſacryfyce offred vnto god. where note to what great inconuenyence, the blynde nature of man is brought vnto, and caryed hedlonge, by the hypocryſie of fayned relygyon, and paynted holynes, when he hath not yͤ worde of god, to teſtyfye with hym yͭ his ſeruyce is good and godlye, yea what thynge can be ymagyned or deuyſed ſo fowle ſo abhomynable, and ſhamefull/but mẽ may be ꝑſwaded vnto it: ſo that Relygyon & holynes be fayned & pretended, vndre the abuſe of the blyſſed & moſt worſhypful name of god: is not this a thynge more then myſerable, more then horryble,

The blindenes of man.

ble, in ſo foule and ſo abhomynable a thynge as was this ſacryfyce of Pryapus to myſuſe yͤ name of god: and by that cloke & pretence ſo many thouſādes of ſoules to be ſeduced, begyled & ledde oute of the ryght waye: And yet god in yͤ meane ſeaſon helde his peace, and ſuffred his name i vngoodly and ſhameful wyſe to be polluted and blaſphemed, to the entent that to thoſe whiche were vnkynde, and had forgoten his grace and fauour, ſo great blindnes, & ſo excedynge great errour ſhulde be as a rewarde and a recompenſacyon of theyr wyckednes, lykewyſe as they had deſerued/ And loke yf it haue not ben euen ſo amonge vs chryſten men For what ſoeuer thyng that wycked tyraunte the Pryapus of Rome, & thoſe ſones of maledyccyō the

Note here the great ſufferaūce of god.

Priapus of Rome.

the byſchops ⁊ doctours, yͭ holde of his doctryne, lernyng ⁊ lawe, dare eyther deuyſe oꝛ fayned ⁊ ymagyne, ⁊ offre vnto vs: yͭ thyng foꝛth wͭ we do receyue ⁊ embꝛace ⁊ do thynke it ſuffycyent. And yͭ foꝛ nothyng els, but onely becauſe they do p̄tende yͤ name of god, ⁊ therwith do couer ⁊ cloke theyꝛ pꝛiapyſche doctryne ⁊ ſacryfyce. And when they pꝛayſe their inuēcyons onely wͭ great tytles, callyng them holy vertuous ⁊ chꝛyſten deuyſes eſtablyſched by the church of god: we foꝛth wͭ do ron vpon them in al yͤ haſt, ⁊ do receyue them neuer ſo moche as ones bethynkyng vs oꝛ cōſydꝛige whether it be alſo cōmāded of god oꝛ ſtādyng wͭ his ſcripturꝫ ſo yͭ this cōmē ꝓuerbe cam not vp foꝛ noughte, neyther is it vſed without a cauſe / In yͤ name of yͤ loꝛde is be

A pꝛouerbe.

gon al miſchief ⁊ vngraciouſnes But god dyd in eſpeciall threten and forbede this very dylygently that we ſhulde not raſchely ⁊ vndyſcretely receyue euery maner thynge, that is offered vnto vs vndre yͤ pretence ⁊ coloure of his name, and as it were ſhewynge and payntynge with his fynger the Pope ⁊ his byſchoppes of our tyme, he ſayth in the.xxiiii chapytre of Mathewe.

> “ MAny men ſhal come in my
> “ name, and ſhall ſay, I am
> “ Chryſte, and ſhall begyle many,
> “ ⁊ leade them out of yͤ ryght way.

ANd for this cauſe, alſo he dyd ſo dylygentlye prouyde ⁊ ordeyne yͭ we ſhulde not take his name in vayne in to our mouthe, or otherwyſe abuſe it/agayne he hath alſo taught vs to

pray

praye in this wyſe. „

¶Halowed be thy name.

¶That is to ſay, graunte that the holye and worſhypfull name of god may coutynue holye and in honoure, & onely be applyed unto thoſe thynges/whiche are truly holy, and truely godly, and ſo that we may not be ſeduced & begyled by the name of god, but yͭ we may be ſaued by it/ And that by all theſe thynges is ſygnyfyed that incredyble peſtilence and calamytie of humane tradyciōs, wherwith god nowe doth punyſhe and ſcourge the worlde by the Pope & his clyentȝ. Fyrſte Moyſes ſheweth & declareth it in the .iiii. chapytre of Deuteronomiū, when he ſayth.

The name of god

Priapus was a fygure of yͤ popes tradycyons, as ꝓueth Moyſes. Deute.4.

YOu ſhall not adde unto yͤ worde whiche I doo ſpeake unto „

“ you, neyther ſhal you take away
“ any thynge therfro/kepe you the
“ cōmaundemētes of your Lorde
“ god, which I do cōmaunde and
“ teache vnto you/And immedya
“ tlye after it foloweth. For your
“ eyes haue ſene, what god hathe
“ done to yͤ Idole Peor, And how
“ he hathe deſtroyed the worſhy-
“ pers of it, and hathe taken them
“ from amonge you.

NOwe why ſhuld Moyſes put Baal Peor for an example moſte ſpecyallye afore all other thynges, when he doth cōmaunde that they ſhuld neyther adde any thynge to the worde of god, nor mynyſhe any thyng therof: excepte it were becauſe he wolde openlye ſhewe that humane tradycyons are nothyng els but an Idole Peor? For theſe do take

Mannes tradyciōs

ke away the lawe of god, and do adde humane thynges. Lykewyſe as euen at theſe dayes the Pope hath ſuppreſſed, or at the leaſt wyſe hathe neglected and deſpyſed almoſt all the cõmaundemẽtes of god, and hathe added his owne humane abhomynacyons as patches ſowed therunto. For (as we haue ſayde often tymes) the Papyſtes do teache, that it is no nede that god be loued with the whole harte: ſo by this is taken awaye the fyrſte cõmaundement/ agayn they do teache, that faythe is not ſuffycyent to iuſtyficacyon, but that good workes are requyred vnto ryghtwyſnes ſo by this yͤ ſeconde ⁊ thyrde p̄cepte falleth to grounde. Beſydes this they do teache yͤ ſones to be dyſobedyẽt vnto yͤ fathers ⁊ mothers, as thẽ ſelues are to yͤ hygh

The heretycall doctryne of the papyſtes.

The papiſtes deſtroye all goddes cõmaundementes.

gouernours ⁊ rulers: (as we haue ſayd heretofoꝛe) by this is taken awaye the fourthe pꝛecepte/ Alſo they teache that it is not nedefull to loue oure enemyes: by this they doo teache wꝛathe and hatred be of ſtrengthe, agaynſte the.v.p̃cepte. Moꝛeouer they haue inuēted and deuyſed innumerable meanes and craftes bothe of knyttynge oꝛ cowplynge matrymonye, and alſo of deuoꝛſynge oꝛ departynge matrymonye: by this is adnulled ⁊ put awaye the ſyxe cōmaūdement. Beſydes all theſe thynges, they do teache to gette and to holde ⁊ kepe ſtyll other mēnes goodes, other mennes thynges, and money gotten by vſurye, cōtrary to the.vii.pꝛecepte. Alſo all theyꝛ hole doctryne is falſe wytnes: contrarye to the.viii.pꝛecepte. So vndꝛe that

Idole the Priapus of Rome there is no precepte of god any lenger ſafe:but al are abrogate and put awaye. On the other ſyde he hath added and put to of his owne, howe that by yͤ habytes of his relygyous ordres, by ſectes beggynge ſonges, organes, frankenſence, ſmokes, belles, lowde noyſe belowynges or rorynges, pardons, ſatyſfaccyons / & by ſuche other vyſyble thynges, the fauour of god is purchaſed and the workes of ryghtwyſneſſe are fulfylled, whiche thynges euery one of theym god dothe hate and abhorre, and wyll not knowe yͤ beſt theym, yf they be done withoute faythe, as all the prophettes doo openly wytneſſe / wherfore euen the doctryne alſo of hym is very Baal Peor / Here vnto Moyſes alſo is conſonaunte & verye well

agre=

The maner of baal honour and ſacryfyce. Nume.25

The blindenes of ẏ gẽtyles.

Coſbi.

agreynge, when he deſcrybeth ẏ ſacryfyce and maner of worſhypynge Baal Peor. Howe it was done all togyther in glotony & lechery. For the gentyles or paynymes were fallen in to ſo extreme blyndnes, that in the honoure of that Idole, they dyd moſt ſhamefully ſet forth theyr owne wyues & theyr fayreſt doughters as cõmen women to ſerue the beaſtlye luſte of who ſoeuer wolde, and it was the cõmen maner and cuſtome, that euery man ſhulde take his pleaſure, and ſatyſfye his abhomynable luſte vpon euery woman that was nereſt vnto hym, after the maner and facyon of beaſtes and dogges. And Moyſes wryteth of Coſbi the doughter of a certayne prynce, howe as ſhe was vſynge the fylthye pleaſure of the fleſhe with a certaine prince & gouernoͬ of Iſrael, both ſhe & he as they were ioyned togyther in that fylthye acte doynge, were ſtryken through with a dagger by a preeſt named Phynees, of whome the pſalme alſo maketh mencyon. Pſalmo. 105.

¶ Phynees pacyfyed &c. Phinees.

Bryefly that moſte wretched people was ſo blynded, that they dyd alſo lyke theym ſelues well, and dydde ſtande in theyr owne conceyte, as often tymes as they dydde offre to this Idole theyr beſt ſones, and theyr moſte tendre doughters / euen lykewyſe as nowe a dayes that Idole the Priapus of Rome doth with his doctryne corrupte and defyle the ſones of great eſtates, and yͤ doughters of prynces, whyles he doth entyſe ⁊ allure theym into monaſteryes or howſes of relygyon, whiche do wene yͭ theyr ſelues do very well in theyr wycked oppynyon to be iuſtyfyed by entrynge in to the ſame, and that they do folowe godlynes and the ryght waye of good lyuynge albeit they be neuer ſo farre from the gyfte of contynauncie. Now all the whole ſcrypture in euery place calleth yͤ madnes of theym whiche do bynde theyr conſcyence captyue to the tradycyons of men and in them lye tomblynge, lettynge yͤ cõmaũdement of god go, whoredome and fornycacion And god in al yͤ prophettes doth rebuke the ſynagoge whiche forſakyng hym the verye god, doth cõmytte fornycacyon with the doctrynes of men, and with the maysters or teachers of humane

Spũall fornycacion ⁊ whoredome.

Synagoge.

tradycyons. So that bodely fylthynes and vnclennes of Baal Peor, maye ſygnyfye none other thynge, then ſpyrytuall adultery and fornycacyon, by whiche ſoules are defyled & are ledde away from yͤ ſymplycytie of the faythe and from the knowlege of Chryſte, in to the cõfydence of workes for euery ſoule yͤ ſcrypture dothe call a ſpyrytuall virgyne or ſpouſes, that is to wyt verely, becauſe of faythe, in whiche ſhe beynge great and full with the holy ghoſte dothe conceyue the wordes of god, & in whiche ſame fayth alſo the holy ghoſte makynge plentyfull the ſede of the worde of god, doth make her yͤ mother of truth that is to ſay doth make her full of true & ſubſtancyall good workes, and of the fruites of true pytie and godlynes. Beſydes this

The ſoule is a ſpũall virgyne & cõceyueth the worde of god by fayth.

fayth is yͤ mother of truthe.

The iterpretacion of Baal.

the nature and propryetie of the name dothe meruayllouſlye well agre vnto this matyer and purpoſe. For Baal in yͤ Hebrwe tonge ſygnyfyeth a man, and yͤ ſuch a maner man which doth by any meanes cleaue to a woman, as yf a woman dydde ſaye, this is my man, whether he be her lawfull huſbāde, or els one to whom ſhe is concubyne. And lykewyſe as we do ſay of an harlotte, that ſhe hath many mē: ſo Baal doth ſignifie & betoken a man wholly addecte & gyuen to women, and a houſholder/ ſo that this worde doth ſygnyfie in his propre ſygnyfycacion not any maner man, but a man which is gyuen to women, and a ſpeaker & gouernour of a houſholde. For elles a man whiche is mete to gouerne the cōmon weale, or to make warre, or

Baal.

to do any other maner earneſt & wayghtie buſynes: is in Hebrwe tonge called Iſch or Enoſch. So the Iewes dyd call the Idole Accaron Beelzebub, that is to ſaye the man or huſbāde of flyes: that is to wyt a man nothyng worthe & without all myght or ſtrength ſcaſely worthy to haue euē a flye to his wyfe. In the laten tonge ſuche a maner man is called maritus or coniunx (not vir, or mas) and the ſame is Baal in the Hebrwe tonge. ¶ Nowe Peor and phegor betokeneth an openynge or gapynge, and it belongeth properlye to the mouthe. Wherfore Baal Peor in the Hebrwe tonge, dothe betoken in Englyſſhe, men whiche haue theyr mouthes alwayes gapynge: and ſuche for the moſte parte ar fooles

Iſch/ Enoſch.
Beelzebub.
Accaron.

Peor.
Phegor.

without any wyt recheles, ſlouthfull, daſtardes, deſyrous of womens company, & nothyng mete to any ſadde or earneſt buſynes/ And therfore vnto this fylthy Idole this name Baal Peor was verye well and accordyngly gyuen: because it was on euery behalfe fylthie and vnclene, and ordeyned onely to fylthynes & baudrye/ For what other thyng ſhulde it meane that, yͤ ymage was grauen in ſuche maner fylthye & ſhamefull facyon: but onely that it ſhuld ſygnyfie a ſlouthfull mã and a folyſſhe, and ſuche one as were greatly deſyrous of the cõpany of women: lykewyſe as the ymage of one in complete harneys & with a ſalette on his hed, doth ſygnyfie a man apte & mete for warres and bataylles / And albeit that feruent fautoures of the

Baal peor.

byſſhop of Rome do cōmytte all theſe ſpyrytuall adulteryes & fornycacyons, as we ſhall heare hereafter: yet for all that (yf I ſhulde not lye(they be ſo ſtronge and mighty and as it were twyſe maryed, that ſome of them do in verye dede playe the adulterers, & that notablye as men ſaye euen wͭ theyr bodyes alſo. For I pray you for the loue of god tell me what is the profyte that cōmeth of this holye and godlye people? Are they not in verye dede Baal Peor, that is to ſay recheles and folyſſhe ydle mē? For what other thynge can they ſkyll of, or what other thynge do they, ſaue onely ryde vpon well fedde, and fatte palfrayes: & kepe fayre wenches yͭ not chaſtlye yet warely (for I wyll vſe theyr owne wyſe terme) with whome they maye lye (god

yf not chaſtelye yet warely.

wotte to auoyde all maner feres that happen in yͤ nyght. So then they are pure Baal peors and do contynue alwayes Baal peors, and yet neuertheles ĩ the meane ſeaſon they do buſely make this coloure and ſemblaunce to begyle men with all, as thoughe they dyd gouerne the churche in ſpyrituall thynges, and dyd conueye ſoules in to heuen, & as thoughe it were they alone, which do plucke vp and rydde awaye errours and hereſyes with great dyligence & care. ¶ Wherfore this Idole ſpyrytually is nothynge elles, but the holy canon lawe, and the doctryne of yͤ Pope & the craftye maynteyners of yͤ ſame. For this is that fylthye and vnclene ymage, in whiche the ſoules doo leſe theyr virgynyte, that is to ſay in whiche they learne to truſte in

The Canon lawe

workes, & to leaue & forſake the chaſtytie and purytie of the ryghtuouſnes of fayth/whiche the Apoſtle calleth the ſymplycytie, whiche is in Chryſte Jheſu.

¶ Wherfore alſo the Pope ſhulde of ryghte be called not the pope, but Priapus: and the papyſtes not papyſtes, but priapyſtes And lykewyſe as it was a verye fylthy and a ſhamefull thynge/ and euen alſo playne agaynſt al reaſon and yͤ cõmen iudgemẽt of men, that the paynymes ſhulde ſo ſette vp an ymage of extreme vnclennes or rybauldrye, by whiche men were prouoked vnto lecherye, and by twyce more fylthy & ſtynkynge vſe therof dyd worſhyp this Idole as it were with cõmen & ſolempne ceremonyes. So in lyke maner and a thouſã-

1.Co.xi.

Priapyſtes.

de tymes worſe, and a thouſande tymes more fylthye and vnclene is the doctryne, the maner and vſage of the papyſtes, whiche by theyr Bulles & by theyr doctryne do allure and drawe the conſcyences of men vnto confydence & truſte in workes / to pardones & ſatyſfaccyõs: wenynge that then pryncipally they haue done excellent and hyghe honoure and ſeruyce vnto god, yf by inuentynge and deuyſynge verye many workes and tradycyons of workes, they do dayly encreace this ſpyrituall fornycacion: as though the god of glorie, and of ſoueraygne Maieſtie were made this Idole of rybaldrye & vnclennes/ when in verye dede the true honoure & ſeruyce of god, & yͤ true ſpyrytuall chaſtitie ſtandeth or reſteth in fayth onely, & in the workes whiche

The true honour & ſeruyce of god.

che god by grace dothe worke in vs. So we do ſe through out all the worlde that the Papyſtes do ſette ſoules vpon this Idole of Priapus, and do fyll the worlde with ſuche maner ſpyrytuall vnclēnes and monſtruous kyndes of ſpyrytuall lecherye. For they do ſette vp the mere doctrynes & workes of men in the holy place, where onelye the worde of god oughte to raygne. And lykewyſe as that abhomynable ymage of Priapus is made lyke vnto a yōge man moſt ſhameles, deſyrous of womans companye, euen ſo ẏ papyſtycall Idole alſo, that is to wytte that doctryne of men, is a certayne madnes and furye contynually ragynge in pollutynge of myndes, and in ydolatrynge & defylynge the chaſtytie of fayth.

The doctryne of men.

Nota.

For we do ſe with howe great labour and dylygence, with howe great ſtryuynge / yea euen yet at this daye in Englande, the papyſtes do noſell the ſelye pore people in theyr doctrine, but after ſuche maner, that by theyr wylles they wyll not be a knowē therof, and ſo craftely (as they thynke) that no man can perceyue them, albeit in yͤ meane tyme euery foole may eſpye them. We ſe (I ſay) howe wodde they are, and howe they rage, as it were mē vexed of fendes, as often tymes as theyr doctryne is iudged or examyned and tryed by the rule of holy ſcryptures. For they wolde not that ſo moche as one ſoule ſhuld eſcape that ſtewes of ſpyrituall lecherye, and thoſe fowle bordell howſes, & yͤ fowle luſte, wherin they do contynually brenne to maynteyne theyr Idole, and ſo to prouyde that there ſhall not one ſoule kepe the chaſtyte of her fayth. This is ſygnyfyed by the name Baal, that is to ſaye a man gyuen to loue of women, that is to wytte, becauſe ſuche maner doctryne of men is onely ordeyned to the pollutynge, corruptynge, and defylynge of ſoules.

Baal.

¶ This ſame alſo is ſygnyfyed by the worde Peor/that is to ſay a gapynge mouth. For they wyl not harken nor gyue eares that they maye here the worde of god but onely that ſtubburne, dyſobedyente, and ſhameleſſe mouthe, with contynuall gapynge dothe barke for the humane doctrynes. For they onelye wyll teache and gyue lawes in the churche, & they

Peor.

requyre ⁊ loke that theyr ſelues onely ſhuld be herde, ⁊ that them ſelues onely ſhulde be taken for byſſhops ⁊ ouerſeers / And this is the cauſe, why they do outwardely pretende ſo goodly and gloryous names with ſo many colours and deceytfull hypocryſes where as in verye dede they are nothynge elles but Peor/that is to ſay men full of tonge, bablers tryflers, and ſhamefull lyers (as ſaynt Paule ſaythe in the fyrſte epyſtle to Tymothe.)

“ Wyllynge or deſyrynge to be
“ teachers of the lawe, ⁊ yet
“ they doo not vnderſtande what
“ thynges they doo ſpeake, nor of
“ what thynges they do affyrme.

By theſe thyngꝭ we may now vnderſtande the wordes of the apoſtle Peter, why, and for

what

Balaam

what cauſe he doth compare and lyken the Pope ⁊ his preuye byſſhops and ſecrete frendes vnto the prophete Balaam. For fyrſte this worde Balaam in yͤ hebrwe ſygnyfyeth a deuourer, lykewyſe as the papyſtes alſo haue deuoured ⁊ ſwalowed vp yͤ ryches of yͤ whole world. Secondarely lykewyſe as Balaam for reſpecte of money, or for rewardes ſake gaue counſayll vnto kyng Balach, that he ſhulde ſette vp the Idole Baal peor, and dyd begyle yͤ people of Iſraell, and let theym out of the ryght waye: euen ſo ſayth the Apoſtle, that yͤ papyſtes whether they ben preuye or knowen, and ſuche other men do folowe yͤ wayes of Balaam: and alſo do rayſe or ſette vp the Idole Baal peor for fylthye lucres ſake. For as we ſe, what ſoeuer humayne

doctryne

doctrine there is, it is euery whyt ordeyned to thende, to gather ryches, to encreaſe worldly ſubſtau̅ce/ bryefly to get plentefull lucre and auau̅tage as we ſe in yͤ kingdome of yͤ Pope and his. On the other ſyde the worde of god or yͤ goſpell, or the worde of the croſſe is barayne & vnfruytfull to brynge forthe any lucre or gaynes.

The goſpell can gette no money.

For there is no man but he flyeth from yͤ croſſe, & euery man greatly hateth trybulacyons and aduerſytie, whiche do alway accompanye and folowe the worde of god. For the apoſtle coulde not of all the ſcrypture haue founde oute a more mete example to deſcrybe and ſette forthe the fylthy and the dowble wycked lyfe of Rome & of the romanyſtes, then this Balaam. For I praye you what other thynge is all yͤ whole kyngdome of the Pope and his vpholders where ſoeuer they be and all the whole wycked Monarchye of hym and his, then couetouſnes & gredy deſyre to gather golde, then money, money, money: for all thynges are there ſo ordered and appoynted, that they may bryng ī lucre. For how tyrannouſly the pope with theſe byenges & ſellynges, with ſutes about prebendes, wͭ the whyrlynge proceſſes of the rote at Rome, wͭ ſo many palles & cotes belongyng to yͤ byſſhops, hath pylled, made bare beggered yͤ world: the thing it ſelf, yͭ is to wyt yͤ extreme pouerte of al Chryſtendom doth euydetly wytnes & declare. Howbeit thoſe loſſes of money & gooddes were not to be paſſed vpon, yf he had not ſet vp this Idole of his deuyliſſhe & wicked doctryne

The Monarchye of yͤ pope.

and called awaye all the whole worlde from very god vnto Idolatrye, onely for this execrable & moſte fylthye lucre. For therin ẏ Balaā of Rome & his doth moſt hurte, and teacheth ſpyrytual adulteryes & fornycacyons, by whiche god is prouoked to wrathe & vengeaunce. So that not onelye (as Moyſes wryteth) .xxiiii.M. do peryſſhe & are deſtroyed: but innumerable ſoules and conſcyences are ſlayne and dampned yf they perſyſt in his doctryne.

Numeri. xxvi.

Furthermore the apoſtle ſayth, ẏ they do ſpeake excedyng prowde and dyſdaynfull wordes. Withoute doubte by theſe wordes he dothe ſygnyfye and rebuke that wycked doctryne, of ẏ Pope and his, as yf he ſhuld ſay the doctryne of theym is vp and downe the verye ryghte Baal peor. For the maiſters and teachers of that doctryne with meruaylous pryde, & with great gapynge and openynge of the mouthe do preache and teache thynges vnfruytfull and wherof ſhall come no profyte at all. I beſeche you is not this opynyon comenly rooted in mennes myndes? and hathe it not ben ſo vſed in our tyme, as though onely the lyfe of Monkes, freers, & preeſtes, were yͤ verye ryght way vnto ſaluacyon and heuen? No man durſte hope to be ſaued, excepte he were one of thoſe holye ſayntes or elles at the leaſte wyſe dyd bye heuen of them. And they theyr owne ſelues dare verye boldely hope to be ſaued, & dare ſelle ſaluacyon vnto other beynge excedyngly ſhameles: lykewyſe as they do openly excerſe marchaũdyſe, ſellynge Maſſes, faſtyngꝭ,

pray

prayers, and good workes done in theyr Monaſteries, as though by theſe meanes they ſhuld conuaye other men in to heuen / are not theſe great thynges I praye you? but what is hydde vnder ỷ royall & goodly cloke & pretence: Nothynge elles but hypocryſye, ſtarke lyes, and craftꝭ & deceytes Romyſhe falſhode, gyles, flaterynge ſlayghtes, bryefly ſnares & grynnes of the deuyll. For in all that whole wycked and vngodly people is there not one Crūme of fayth or fydelytie: but al theyr holynes ſtandeth in theyr ſhauen crownes / in theyr longe robes, in ſayenge or ſyngyng of Pſalmes in ỷ dyuerſitie of garmētes or habytes, in hypocrytyſe faſtinges, in belles, in the ſmokes of the ſenſers, in ſuche thyngꝭ as theſe (I ſaye) reſteth all theyr holynes.

And of theſe thyngꝭ they do challenge and take vnto them ſelues thoſe noble tytles : of ſpyrytuall ſtate, of holy orders, of preeſtes & byſſhops as though they ſhulde be meanes betwene god & other men, yͤ is to wyt makynge theyr owne ſelues newe medyatoures or meanes, leaſte that onely medyatour, whome god hath ordayned & appoynted, Chryſt Jheſus were not yuough for all ſuffycyent, but had lyen hym downe to ſleape. O Balaam yͤ ſone of Belyall god gyue the ſhorte tyme to contynue with thyne abhomynable Jdole, whiche gatherynge & ſcrapyng together money on euery ſyde doſte kyll and ſlee ſoules. 1. Timothe. 2. Beſydes this the apoſtle ſayth, yͤ by ſo goodly a colo' & ſo glorious a cloke & p̄tẽce they do only allur & drawe mẽ vnto yͤ luſtꝭ & deſyrꝭ of the fleſſhe, in ſo moche yͭ thoſe men are compelled to lyue in erroure whiche ſomtyme had truely eſcaped. I verely do not doubte, that the ſpyryte of god dothe here by the mouthe of peter rebuke not one erroure alone, or one ſynne and abhomynacyon alone but dothe touche and rebuke all the whole heape of ſynnes & vyces, whiche lyeth hydde vnder yͤ goodly coloure and hypocryſye. For we ſe howe wyde and largely the Relygyon of men of yͤ churche dothe extende and ſtretche it ſelfe, howe many ſectes it dothe contayne, whiche ſectes are egally bounden all the rable of them to chaſteti, not withoute a relygyous and a deuoute othe. when notwithſtandynge the ſcrypture and with dayly experyence dothe teache, yͭ perpetuall chaſtytie is an hygh gyft of god farre aboue the power and ſtrength of nature, whiche gyfte chaunceth but euen to verye fewe holye and ſpyrytuall men alſo. But oure byſſhops here beynge blynde & mad do ronne on hedlonge, & do bynde all maner ꝑſones indyfferentlye with this bonde, none otherwyſe then yf chaſtytie were a verye eaſy thynge and lyghte to be kepte of euery man/ and ſo with thoſe hyghe prayſes of virgynytie & of theyr ſpyrytuall ſtate (for they ſo do call it) they do allure & drawe ſelye youth in to theyr nettes of theyr ſyngle lyfe, whiche youthe then afterwardes dothe defyle it ſelfe contynuallye with fowle lecherye and vncleane luſtes. And hereof it is that we do ſe them bothe men and women, whiche beyng letted and holden

The fructes of the popes chaſtytie.

in within the pryſones of monaſteryes, ⁊ with iyerne lockes and grates can not haue the cõpany of man or woman, to ſynne more fylthelye ⁊ more abhomynablie (ſauyng reuerẽce) in ſodomytrie or buggerie, then a man dare be bolde to vtter or expreſſe. For albeit they do neuer ſo moche conteyne outwardly, as cõcernynge the bodely acte: yet that notwithſtandyng they do inwardly boyl ⁊ brenne with vncleane luſte ſo yͭ amõg thẽ eyther there is whoredome vnder the colour ⁊ cloke of ſpyrytuall ⁊ eccleſiaſtycal lyfe, or at yͤ leaſt wyſe there is conſtrayned ⁊ tyrannouſly extorted chaſtytie. And of a ſuertie, there are more greuous ieopardyes of cõſcyẽces ⁊ greater calamytie ⁊ miſerie there, then any mã may eyther expreſſe wͭ his tõge or thynk with his herte, ⁊ this is it yͭ Pe-

Nota.

ter rebuketh here, whē he ſaythe.

THey allure ⁊ draw mē with ,, pleaſurꝫ of yͤ fleſhe through ,, concupyſcēces and luſtes. ,,

AS though he dyd ſay of thoſe our biſſhops ⁊ preſtes Indede they do preache many thynges of yͤ ſpyrytuall ⁊ eccleſiaſtycal ſtate, ⁊ they do meruaylouſly prayſe ⁊ magnyfie chaſtytie: but with thoſe theyr fayre ⁊ pleaſaūt wordes they do begyle ſely pore yōge men ⁊ womē, ⁊ do leade thē ⁊ al other in to yͤ myddes of yͤ fylthy ſtynkyng pumpe of lechery ⁊ vncleane luſtes, which a lytle before through baptyſme had truly eſcaped yͤ power of ſynne and of the deuyll, and had begon well in the chryſten faythe and in the goſpell. For hereof it is that ſo many men do ronne ſo hedlōge ⁊ blyndlye in to theſe kyndes of

Why ſo many rōne to religyon.

Fayth.

lyuyng: becauſe they do ſuppoſe that baptiſme ⁊ the vertue therof is loſte through actuall ſynne, and doth worke nothynge any lenger in them. And hereof alſo it is that they do not regarde but do deſpyſe faythe, as a vayne ⁊ a triflyng thyng wͭout any fruyte or profyte (whiche for all that is yͤ onely thynge that doth iuſtify) and they doo take vpon them a more holy and a more pure maner of lyuynge, and (as it appereth to them) alſo a more ſpirituall and a more hygh kynde of lyuynge, that is to wytte to lyue ſole and chaſte. And then this thinge without fayth ⁊ without the ſpirite is vnpoſſible for them to do, and ſo they are caſt downe in to yͤ myddes of this depe dongeon of myſerie ⁊ wretchydnes, for it is poſſyble that the deuyll may for the ſpace of one yere or two, yea ⁊ alſo ſomtyme of hole tenne yeres ſuffre ſuche maner men to be quyet (howbeit this happeneth very ſeldome) but yet for all yͤ the ſame men at length do not cõtynue chaſte, onles they do learne faythe and Chriſte, or elles do get ſome hygher gyfte. For the deuyll hathe that man, who ſoeuer he be, which is without fayth, ſo ſurely ⁊ ſo faſt boũden in the ſnares of lechery ⁊ vncleane luſtes: that he nede not to lye in wayte, or to vſe his deuyliſhe craftes aboute them, wherfore he doth ſo mocke hym, and doth ſuffre hym for a certeyn ſeaſon to lyue quyetly, yea in ſo moche that he begynneth alſo to haue great delyte and pleaſure in chaſtite: but yet he is more thẽ ſure that the man can not eſcape

A man without fayth.

out of his ſnares without fayth and the ſpyryte, or elles ſome ſpyrytuall gyfte of god , namely ſeynge that euen thoſe men alſo haue buſyneſſe ynough & moche worke to kepe them ſelues vpryght and vnouercomen in this behalfe , whiche ar ſpyrytuall in very dede, and whiche truſtynge and beyng bolde vpõ theyr manly & ſtronge couragyous faythe, alwayes watchfull, & ſtandynge vp ryght do contynually wreſtle and fyght with hym contynually. Bryefly take this for ſure and vndoubted, that all that ſo hyghly prayſed chaſtyte and contynẽcie of eccleſyaſtycall perſones , whoſe hertes are not puryfyed & rayſed vp with faythe (as all the preeſtes for the moſt parte ar ignoraunt of Chryſte) is nothynge elles but mere hypochryſye & deuylyſhe

The chaſtyte of al eccleſyaſtycal perſons/whiche haue not the faith that iuſtifyeth uylyſhe deceyppte, by whiche they do allure youthe into moſt great ieopardyes, when in the meane ſeaſon no good thynge at all is hydde vnder this goodly and deceyptfull ſemblaunces or apperaunce. And wolde to god that nowe an hundred monaſteryes were brought vnto one, and that of one hundred churches collegyate there were left ſcantly one or two, and the ſame to be inſtytuted and ordayned for a ſcole of chryſten youthe, and not for a gage or place to boſte and ſhewe forthe ceremonyes in. Beleue me this ſo great and ſo excellent Apoſtle dyd not ſpeake in vayne & for nought, wherfore as I haue ſayde alwayes euen ſo I ſaye agayne nowe, who ſoeuer may, let hym kepe hym ſelf euen as farre awaye from all maner bondes

Cathedral churches.

of religyon, frõ all monaſteryes and temples, where the ſcripture & fayth is not earneſtly taught, and where ſoeuer Chriſte is not taught, and ſpirytuall workes are exercyſed bothe day & nyght, as he wolde from a peſtylence. For it is not poſſible to be otherwyſe, but that theſe monaſteryes and churches bothe cathedrall & collegiate are the gates of hell: yf the goſpell be not there contynually preached and ſyncerely taught. And except the goſpel do raygne in ſuch places, and be exercyſed by the croſſe, by temptacions and tribulaciõs, alwayes through moſte ſure and vpryght hope and moſt lyuely fayth: it is not poſſible, but that all thynges there done are and muſte be corrupte, hypocritycall, and deuylyſhe, howeſoeuer holy they appere in ſight. Neyther is there in ſuch a place any hope of counſel or remedy. Wherfore good reader, I do oftentymes louyngly admonyſhe, and hertely exhorte the, flee flee (wylte thou that I ſhal ſpeke it a thouſand tymes?) flee and eſchewe the eſtate of religyous men, which is ſo choſen, ſought and inuented by the madnes and vanytie of mannes coũſayll, without ſcripture, without the byddyng, without the comaũdemente and worde of god. To the kepyng of true chaſtite, fyrſt there is nede of a lyuely, effectuall, ſtronge, proued, tryed, and very angelical gyfte, which may of a certeyn efficacy and ſtrẽght properly belongyng vnto it ſelf, & of her owne courageous force commyng by the grace of god carye vp the ſpirite aboue ẏ fleſhe,

True chaſtite.

and which alſo may rule and cõmaunde deſyres and affeccyons, and which may as it were a certayne very hote fyer, drye vp the iſſues & flowynges of yͤ fleſſhe, and brynge a man in that caſe, that he begynne to ſette lyghte by this lyfe, and by hym ſelfe, in a maner turned by the gyfte of god in to an angelycall nature.

AND excepte that god, with yͤ moſte free & paſſyng hyghe gyfte of contynencie or chaſtytie in body & mynde do gyrde in and holde vnder his raynes: it is but labours all in vayne, to goo aboute by any myghte or power of man to brydle or ſubdue yͤ flamyng heate of yͤ fleſſhe. But thoſe madde men and vtterly ignoraunt of fayth & ſpyryte, and alſo vnſkylled of ſpyrytuall thynthinges, do go about to prouyde for theſe thynges, and to remedye them by theyr colde workes, with faſtynges, with habytes or veſtures, with prayers ſet & appoynted, with the pryſonnes of monaſteryes or relygyous houſes, none otherwyſe then yf one wolde go about to ſtoppe the ryuer of Thaymes of his courſe, with a banke made of ſtraw, leauynge in the meane ſeaſon the ſprynge or hed of it vnſtopped. This felowe that wolde ſo doo, myght paduẽture ſooner deſtroy the lãdes lyeng nere, wᵗ the ouer flowyng of yͤ ſayd ryuer: thẽ ſtop or let the courſe of the ſame. So theſe men do leaue vnto nature her naturall flowynges, whyles they do not teache yͤ knowledge of the gyfte of chaſtytie, & yet do go aboute with eatyng of fyſſhe

A ſimylitude.

and with dyuerſitie and choyſe of garmentes, and with the pryſones of monaſteryes, to ſtoppe and kepe vnder the ſayd nature, that ſhe ſhall not breake forth in to iſſues or flowynges: whē that natural power and that natural deſyre to contynue and encreace his kynde is ſo depely roted and groūded in the fleſhe that it can not by any power or ſtrength of man be plucked vp & put away. and ſo the goodly and excellent purytie of theyr chaſtytie is this onely, to kepe them ſelues vnmaryed: but yet neuertheles in the meane ſeaſon to folowe fleſhely luſtes, cōmenly beynge the worſte lyuers of all other. And ſo it is true that Peter the Apoſtle ſayth, that with theyr goodly hypochriſy, & with theyr hyghe and gloryous prayſes of this colou=

The chaſtitie of ẏ papiſtical ſpiritualtie.

red and paynted chaſtite, they do allure & begyle the cōmen people, & very many vnſkylled yong mē, makyng them to beleue that by this ſpirituall (for ſo they call it) eſtate & by workes they ſhall be chaſte and holy, and do moſte hyghe honour and ſeruyce vnto god, and this is that errour of al other farre yͤ worſte in the which they ar compelled to lyue, which a lytle before were delyuered frō all errour throughe baptyſme & the fayth of Chriſte. Is not this then a goodly and an excellent prayſe of preſtes and relygyous men, whiche ſo great an Apoſtle gyueth vnto them: that is to ſay, that the lyfe of them is nothyng elles, but great & goodly ſoundes of wordſ, vnder which there is no good thyng hydde or meaned, vnder whiche maner of lyuyng uynge alſo moſte fowle vnclenneſſe and moſt groſſe ſynnes are couered, & with whiche them ſelues do ſeduce and leade chryſten men from yͤ hygh waye of fayth, and frō the knowlege of Chryſt, in to comberous & inextrycable maſes of errours? yf I ſhulde paynt & ſet out byſſhops, preſtes & relygyous perſons with ſuche maner colonrs, I ſhulde be proclaymed. cccccc. tymes an heretyke, and theſe praters of vayne thynges (I ſhulde haue ſayde preachers of dyuyne thynges) wolde crye out a thouſande tymes & more. To yͤ fyre, to yͤ fyre. Thou canſt not denye (ſay they) but that many ſayntes , as Auguſtyne , ſaynte Barnarde , and Francyſke, dyd profeſſe this maner of lyuynge, what therof? (I ſay) you blynde guyders, do you not ſe, yͭ thoſe fathers Barnard, Auguſtyne, & ſuch other holy mẽ were ſaued not by theyr workes, not by theſe orders, ſo as you do wene: but by yͤ knowing of chriſt but by fayth: & yͭ they dyd not accõpte or take theſe outwarde exercyſes for yͤ waye & cauſe of ſaluacyõ: but onely for an outward exercyſe to chaſtyce & ſubdue the pryde & rebellyõ of yͤ fleſche. Let this therfore be ſuffycyent to vs now yͭ we haue opẽ & playn teſtimonyes of yͤ moſt excellẽt Apoſtles Peter & Paule, whiche haue deſcrybed & haue ſet forth to our iyes yͤ papyſtes wͭ all theyr wycked lyfe & doctryne: yͭ is to wyt, yͭ they ar yͤ ſonnes or chyldrẽ of maledictiõ & mõſters of yͤ world, burdeyns of yͤ earthe, to be ſhoned & eſchewed of al thoſe which ar yͤ louers of true vertu & good lyuing

How the olde fathers eſtemed outwarde workes.

But what Chriſt hym ſelfe, and what the prophetes Eſaie/Hieremie/and Ezechiel with other do ſay with moſt vehement and very tragicall affeccyons, and with meruaylous playneſſe and boldneſſe, cōcernyng this matter: we ſhall differre & put of in yͤ meane ſeaſon whyles, the pope and byſſhops with all theyr garde and retynue freattynge & fomyng agaynſt this veritie after theyr accuſtomed maner, ſhall blowe on thoſe my lytle ſparkes. Nowe yf the men, whiche are by nature ſo deſyrous of glorie, and which ar wont to flaterynges, do cōplayn that they be not handled of me lyke byſſhops accordyng to theyr dignytie: no man ſhall greatly blame me therfore, for aſmoche as they do not behaue them ſelues, as it becometh byſſhops to do. For I do forbeare them and gyue thẽ more honour, then they be worthye to haue in that I do vouchesafe to call them by ſo holy and ſo olde a worde, I meane the name of byſſhop, for they ought to be called by very odyous tytles, yf I ſhulde call them as dothe ſaynt Paule the Apoſtle, and as Steuen the fyrſt marter doth call them. For a byſſhop ought to be very cõnynge in the Byble, and day and nyght to labour and ſtudye in the holy ſcripture, and to be ſuche one, whiche ſhulde in his owne ꝑſone teache his people, bothe pryuately and openly, & inſtructe them to know Chryſte (as ſaynt Paule doth reherſe) & whiche alſo in his owne propre perſone ſhulde vyſyte ſyk mẽ, & ſuccoure & releue pore, and nedye men. Nowe they are no-

The name of a byſſhop.

Actes.vii

Actes.xii

tynge elles (I meane the papyſtes) but blynde guydes, whiche defendyng yͤ tradycyons of men and the papyſtycall marchaundyſe, by fraudes and guyles doo plucke awaye, and by infynyte craftes do extorte the goodes of other men. Therfore lykewyſe as ſhepeherdes whē it fortuneth them to ſe the wolfe, doo make a great outcrye vpon hym, ſayeng the wolfe, the wolfe, the wolfe, euen ſo alſo wyll I crye out here euen vntyl I be hoorſe with cryenge to ſuch tyme as they amēde theyr maners. I wyll deſcrybe ſome of theyr vertues, to thentēt that all chryſten men both nowe lyuyng & hereafter to come may haue knowledge therof, howbeit yet I wyll forbeare frō ſhewyng theyr names and perſones, neyther wyll I rebuke and inuaye agaynſt that worldly admynyſtracyon & dignytie whiche they beare, but I ſhall pryncypally touche that thynge, whiche concerneth yͤ captyuyte of conſcyences, that they may ones ſe & perceyue, that there is by the gyfte of god ſome ſhepe of ſo great a flocke ſprongē vp which al other hytherto beyng affrayde dare be bolde to ſaye. Lo vnder theſe goodly dyſguyſyngꝭ, vnder this fayre name, and vnder this apareyll of byſſhops are hydde rauynous wolues. And of this my lybertie and bolde playneſſe, I haue an excellent example the Apoſtle Paule, which dyd in open audyence very ſharply and ſore rebuke the hyghe preeſte Ananias, and ſayde.

Paule. Ac.xxiii.

Ananias

,:,

“ GOd ſhall ſtryke the, thou
“ whyted wall, thou ſytteſt
“ here to iudge me according
“ to the lawe, & yet contrarye to the
“ law doſt cõmaũde me to be ſtrykẽ

THere he calleth the hyghe preeſte a whyted wall, yͭ is to ſay, a perſon which with certeyn payntynge and vayne colourynge outwardly dothe pretende to be that thynge, whiche he is not, and the Apoſtle dothe threten vnto hym ponyſſhement of god, and doth handle hym nothynge reuerently, but lykewyſe as yf he had ben not onely a pryuate perſone, and not the hyghe byſſhop. And whẽ certeyne men had blamed and rebuked hym, for that he had ſpokẽ euyll to the ruler of the people: he anſwered. Brethern I dyd not knowe that he was a byſſhop, what thoſe wordes of the Apoſtle do meane, it is eathe to cõiecture. For yf he had feared yͭ hym ſelfe had done amyſſe in that he had ſo wyſſhed vengeaũce to hym from god, no doubte of it he wolde haue aſked after an humble maner forgyuenes of the hygh byſſhop, & wolde haue reuoked his rebukefull worde, but this thynge Paule in no wyſe dyd. Neyther can theſe wordes of ſaynt Paule be ſo taken, as though he was vtterly ignoraunte that he was byſſhop. For who wolde thynke it lykely, that Paule was openly brought forthe vnto the place of iudgement, and that no man gaue to hym any monicyon or knowlege before with theſe or lyke wordes. Lo Paule thou ſhalt be preſented before the byſſhop ſyttyng in iudgement, or elles to the ſame effecte. Lo Paule he that ſytteth there, is the chyefe byſſhop: namely ſeynge that we are wont in ſo open and cōmen maters dylygently to enquere & learne the perſones, namely of the iudges. And thoughe Paule had ben neuer ſo moche ignoraunt, that he was the hygh byſſhop: yet for all that he ſawe hym ſytte in the hyghest place, and by that he perceyued that he was the iudge, because he dyd cōmaūde Paule to be ſtrykē. He ought therfore here of ryght to ſpare & forbeare the power and prehemynence which he hym ſelfe doth cōfeſſe & knowledge. Wherfore this ſayenge of Paule of neceſſyte muſt thus be vnderſtande, brethren I dyd not know that he is byſſhop, as if he had ſayde, he ought in dede to be byſſhop: but I ſe nothynge in hym, nor I do know any poynte in hym that is belongynge vnto a byſſhop. He oughte veryly to playe the byſſhop in very dede: but he doth not but openly dothe iniurye to me beyng not conuyct or caſt. For thus alſo doth Auguſtyne hym ſelfe expounde it, yf nowe Paule the Apoſtle doth ſo ſharpely and boldely rebuke the preeſte, whiche was conſtytuted by the law of Moyſes, yea by the lawe of god: why then ſhulde I be affrayed to touche and rebuke theſe coloured and paynted byſſhops, whiche by the tyranny of the pope, by the fauours of men, and by holy golde haue inuaded byſſhoprykes, without the cõmaundemẽt eyther of god, or of men.

¶ The fyrſte proprietie and vertue of the papyſtycall byſchops.

FIrſte theſe byſſchops haue ſuffred and nowe a dayes do ſuffre in ſtede of the worde of god (whiche onely, onely, onely, onely, I ſaye ought to be preached in the churche) theyr indulgences and pardones to be publyſched & preached, and ẏ this thynge is not onely wycked, but alſo blaſphemous & deuylyſche, and full of deathe and hell, it appereth euydentlye ynough euen hereof, ſeynge that it is agaynſt the fyrſt precept & cõmaundemẽt of god, where he dyd cõmaunde that none other ought to be preached, ſaue onely ẏ worde of god,

The fyrſt precept.

and that to hym alone honour is to be gyuen in all thynges, that he might be our god, our teacher & mayſter, as he ſayth by Eſaie.

I Am thy god teachynge the »
profytable thynges. »

AND Chriſte doth moſte greuouſlye and ſore inuaye agaynſt yͤ doctrynes of men, wherfore all humane doctryne is none other thynge then an Idole, & a certeyne ymage, whiche beynge ſet vp in the ſtede of the lyuyng and very god, doth leade men in to perdicyon & a eternall deſtruccyō. But now no mā can denay that bulles & pardones ar not yͤ worde of god, and that nothynge concernynge theſe thynges is conteyned in the ſcriptures. Beſydes this we are alſo cō-

Mat. xv.

Pardons

pelled to confeſſe and graunte, that all theſe places of ſcripture and other out of nombre do condempne all doctryne, whiche is not the worde of god. Agayne god hym ſelf doth gyue ſentence that all ſuche maner thynges ar vnprofytable, vayne, and apperteynynge to Idolatrie: & whiche are to be eſchewed vnder payne of the indignacyon and wrath of almyghty god. But for as moch as theſe delycate and tendre byſſhops haue forehedes of yerne and neckes of braſſe, as it is ſayd in the prophetes, & wyll not here: they can not be perſwaded & they ronne forthe on, accordynge to theyr owne madnes, theyr owne courſe, and theyr owne ſwynge, & where as they ought to ſpende theyr bloode and theyr lyfe (I meane not in any worldly fyght)

The ſlouthefulnes and recheleſnes of Byſſhops.

for yͤ mayntenaunce of yͤ worde of god agaynſt the doctrynes of men: they ſlepe all careles, and gyue theyr myndes al togythers to pleaſures, and to fare well, and yͤ ſoules, of which they boſte them ſelues to be the paſtoures and feders, they do moſt ſlouthfully neglecte, and nothyng care for. But ſuch is theyr negligence They doo onely thynke and ſtudye howe they may brynge in the dredefull wrathe of god vpon men, and drawe ſoules vnto the depe pytte of helle, and that they may at the laſte carye the conſcyences of men clene ouerthwarte from the worde of god in to lyes and deuylyſſhe errours, and the doctrynes of men, wherfore we ought here ſo moch the more dylygently to take good hede, & to loke wel about, yͭ we may ſhew &

vtter vnto the worlde theſe ſo cruell & ſo blody wolues, whiche doo lye hydde vnder forked myters ſet with peerles and precyous ſtones, I do therfore exhort all chryſtẽ men in our lorde, that they wyll here conſydre and pondre the wrathe of god. And therfore lykewyſe as you wolde doo with a viſyble Idole: euen ſo do now with the bulles of theſe Romyſche Balaam, the tourmẽtour & ſleer of ſoules. Conſydre howe pleaſaunt a thynge you ſhall do vnto god, yf you do breake and daſche in peces (with the worde of god, and not with the ſwerde) theſe Idoles, & do ſanctyfye his gloryous name, and do delyuer it from the fylthy abhomynacyō of Idolatrie, wherfore who ſoeuer I ſaye who ſoeuer may: let hym here boldely and manfully

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ronne on, and teare the ſayd Idolatrycall bulles, let hym rente them in ſmall peces, lette hym brenne them, let hym vtterly deſtroye them. And truſtynge vnto his owne good conſcyence and faythe, let hym boldly plucke vp by the rootes theſe abhomynacyons brought in contrary to the worde of god, for the moſte precyous and the moſte holy and deuoute worſhippyng of god is (yf it be done by the hyghe powers) to beate downe & deſtroye Idoles, and to ouerthrowe them, and to breake them in to ſmall gobbettes, whiche thynge Moyſes doth ſo oftentymes teache & commaunde in Deuteronomiū. So dyd Gedeon breake the Idole Baal, in the .viii. chapter of Iudicū. So dyd yͤ kyng Aſa breake the Idole of Papus in yͤ thyrde boke

Moyſes.

Gedeon.

Aſa.

boke of kynges the. v. chapytre. And all theſe ſayd perſons were hyghlye prayſed of god , and rewarded agayne wᵗ meruaylous grace. No doubte of it the tyme that nowe is , is that laſte age or tyme of the worlde, in which it is to be feared , that the flocke ſhall take more hurte of the ſhepeherdes, then of the wolues.

¶ The ſeconde vertue and propryetie of theſe fore ſayd byſſhops.

¶ Chryſte ſaythe.

“ Frelye you haue receyued:
“ frely gyue you.

Cleane cõtrary to this euydent & playne ſayeng of Chryſte our byſſhops doo ronne on hedlonge, and not onely they do ſuffre lyes & the doctrynes of men, ſuche as be contrary to to ẏ goſpell,

pell, to be preached: but alſo with a bolde ſhameles face they doo vſe and applye all theyr ceremonyes, prayers, maſſes, baptyſme, holy oyle , and halowynges of churches, they do (I ſay) applye all theſe thynges to lucre, and do ſell thē for money. Notwithſtandyng that they be boūde to gyue frely all theſe ſpyrytuall gyftes vnder payne of eternall dampnacyon. Nowe the caſe put, that indulgēces and pardones were of ſome ſtrength, & were good and profytable: yet they ought to offre vndeſyred and frely and lyberally to gyue forthe yͤ ſame, and the goodnes and benefyte therof vnto all maner men, accordynge to the cōmaundement of Chryſt, how moch more ſynfull a thyng thē & how moch more ſhameful & abhomynable a thyng is it, now,

to ſell

to ſel ſtarke lyes, mere deceyptes and more then harlottes guyles, to Chryſtes faythfull people for money, after a blaſphemous maner and faſſhyon. For euen the holy ghoſt hathe by ſaynt Paule deſcrybed the ryches of chryſten men.

The ryches of chriſten men.

“Hauynge (ſayth he) meate, drynke & clothynge: let vs holde vs cōtent therwith.

I Beſeche the nowe good reader hathe not this Balaam of Rome, ryches ynoughe, poſſeſſyons ynough, lordeſhyps, and domynyons ynough, cyties, and kyngdomes ynoughe, euen in Italy alone, that he may compare with the moſt myghtie kynges that are. though I ſpeke nothyng in the meane ſeaſon of the moſt ſhamefull byenges and ſellynges, of yͤ moſt ſtynkyng baudy craftes and of the moſte vngracyous and deuelyſſhe ſubtyletyes and deceyptes by whiche he doth euery where through out the whole world ſcrape togyther golde and ſyluer meaſuryng all thynges by golde, ⁊ referrynge all thynges to yͤ ende of gettyng money, in the meane ſeaſon the care and charge of pore folkes, (which charge onely Paule doth reherſe in his epyſtle vnto yͤ Galatiās to be cōmytted vnto hym, and whiche ſayd care he doth exercyſe ſtoutly this cure ⁊ charge Act. viii. (I ſaye) is ſtrongly neglected ⁊ ix. Cor. layde quyte apart. Beſydes this eyther of the Apoſtles, that is to wyt, both Peter and alſo Paule, amonge other vertues of a very byſſhop do nōbre ⁊ rekē this alſo

“ That a byſſhop ought to abhorre & be farre away from fylthye lucre.

They wyl therfore that a byſſhop ſhulde get vnto hym ſelfe ſuche thynges as are neceſſary to his ſuſtenaunce and lyuynge by honeſt & godly meanes, to the example of other. And Paule hym ſelfe, whiche was ſo excellent an Apoſtle, dyd lyue by the worke and labour of his handes, and he dyd not dyſdayne (althoughe he was greater than all the byſſhops yͭ euer were or now be) to exercyſe a handy crafte, into what towne ſoeuer he dyd come. And for this cauſe alſo he lodged and was at hoſte in Corynthe with Priſca and Aquila, for yͭ they were of the ſame crafte and occupacion, and he wrought

Priſca.
Aquila.

with them. Nowe let vs make a comparyſon of the one with the other. Is not yͤ moſt fylthye and more then hooryſſhe maner of gettynge money, whiche the byſſhop of Rome and his clyentes byſſhops doo vſe. Is it not (I ſaye) in comparyſon of the purytie of the Apoſtle, more ſtynkynge and more fylthy then any ſtues, then any bordell houſe? when golde is requyred for thoſe folyſſhe fortye dayes of indulgence and pardon, by whiche certeyn nombre of dayes the Romanyſtes (god wot leaſt they ſhulde be ouer moche lauace in gyuyng forthe ſo precyous a thynge for noughte) haue opēly mocked our mytred byſſhops? is it not I ſay moſt ſhameful & filthy lucre in al ages and tymes, when money is requyred for ſuche other tryfles, bryefly for lyes ⁊ deceyptes, and when thoſe bawdes the Romanyſtes, with ſuche as they be, are fedde and nouryſſhed with the ſwete of the poore people. But this is but yͤ leaſte parte of theyr wycked marchaundyſe, for other byſſhops of theyr complexcyon haue infynyte craftes, and moſte ſhameful meanes of gettyng money: of whiche we ſhall hereafter ſpeke more largely yf they beyng offended with this gentle monycyon wyll alſo vncurtayſlye be wroth with me monyſſhyng thē ſo fauourably ⁊ openly ynough, as I ſuppoſe. And here it is not vnknowen to me what they doo obiecte. Is it not ynough nor ſuffycyent for a prynce (ſaye they) to haue meate, drynke, ⁊ clothynge, excepte he haue alſo ſuffycyently wherof he may kepe and maynteyne a garde or bende of men accordynge to the condycyon and eſtate of a prynce, what prynces do in this place obiecte & alledge for them ſelues of the pryncelye ſtate, and of prynces courtes, aduyſe them, the Apoſtle ſpeaketh not of prynces, but of byſſhops, as for theſe pryncely byſſhops & byſſhoppely prynces he vtterly knoweth nothynge of, whiche do begyle the worlde with the name of byſſhop, & with yͤ moſte vayne colours of ceremonyes, & gloues and mytres. But therfore Paule and the ſpyryte of god, whiche ſpake in hym: ſhall not chaunge theyr wordes, neyther attempre them ſelues vnto theſe prynces: but theſe pryncelyke byſſhops ſhall be fayne to attẽpre and applye them ſelues in theyr lyuyng accordyng to the mynde of ſaynt

Paule and his wordes, or elles they ſhall not be byſchops, nor paſtours, but mere puppettes & vyſures. I can not here refrayne (although I lyſte not now greatlye to bourde in the reherſall of theſe thynges) but I muſte reherſe a pleaſaunt and merye hyſtorie. It happened vpon a tyme that a certeyn ſuche maner pryncely byſchop dyd ryde with a royall pompe and goodly company of horſemen, (as cõmenly ſuche byſchops ar wont to ſhewe them ſelues ſet forthe gaylye and gorgyouſly euen aboue any worldly or temporall prynces) throughe the feldes that laye nere vnto a certeyne vyllage, whome when a certeyne ſhepherde had happely eſpyed as he rode ouer the feldes: he lefte his flocke, and dyd

An hyſtory or narracyon.

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ronne vnto hym, and ſtarynge and gaſyng vpon hym, as it had ben one amaſed, he meruayled greatlye at the ryches, and the pompe and gorgyouſnes, which he ſawe aboute hym. The byſſhop ſeynge hym ſo gaſynge, ſayde vnto hym: what doſte thou ſe here, that thou doſte meruayle ſo greatlye? Then he as he was an homly ruſtycall felowe, made to hym this playne anſwere. I meruayle (ſayde he,) whether ſaint Martyn dyd vſe this ſame pompe, or lyke gorgyouſnes and ſuperfluytie. To whome the byſſhop ſayde. Forſothe thou arte a ſtarke foole, and takeſt thy marke amyſſe. For ſaynt Martyne was ſcacelye one of the vyle and raſcall people: but I am alſo a prynce of hygh and noble byrth.

Then ſayd yͤ ſhepherde agayne, I beſeche you my lorde wyll you gyue me leaue to ſpeke a worde? yea marie, ſayde the byſſhop, I gyue the good leaue, demaunde what thou wylt. Then ſayd the ſhepeherde, what yf the deuyll ſhulde take and bere awaye the prynce: ſhall there remayne any thynge of the byſſhop? At theſe wordes that good pryncely byſſhop beynge confounded and aſſhamed, departed from the man, and rode his way. So yͤ Apoſtle Pauſe. Paule in comparyſon of thoſe dukes and Nemrothes, was a playne ſymple craftes man, lyuynge by the worke of his owne hãdes. And therfore he went ſomtyme on his feete, and preached the goſpell all abrode, he coulde playe yͤ Apoſtle, but ſuche a pore and lewde perſone as he was, could neuer haue played yͤ royall and pryncely byſſhop after this faſſhyon, and the wrathe and the furye of god.

¶ The thyrde vertue.

THese byſſhops are content, and do ſuffre that the preachers do publyſſhe the indulgẽces & bulles of the pope of Rome, by whiche the ſayd pope doth mercyfully graunt lycence to kepe ſtyll other mẽnes goodes goten eyther by robberye and extorcion, or elles by ſome other vnlawfull and myghtye meanes, ſo that ſome porcyon therof be gyuen to hym & to the holy churche of Rome, & to the proctours and cõmyſſaryes of yͤ pardones, that is to wyt, ſo that them ſelues alſo may get ſome part of the ſayd ſpoyles, and wrongfully gotten goodes. And here verely I am in doubte with my ſelfe, wt what tytle I myght beſte garnyſche theſe ſo mõſtruous poyntꝫ of couetouſnes: and of truthe I am halfe in doubte, whether I maye call the pope with his byſchops folowynge and alowynge theſe thynges, dull aſſes, or elles inſenſyble blockes, or elles peuyſche, madde, and vtterly furyous men whiche with ſo great ſhameles boldnes, and with ſo great madnes do not onely exercyſe openly ſo fowle and ſhameful deceytes but alſo do in euery coũtrey and place teache the ſame by theyr freers and other relygyous perſones ſent forthe to preache. For god hath cõmaunded, thou ſhalt not ſtele: This precept theſe monſters of Rome with ſuche other theſe cruell wylde beaſtes with meruaylous fyerſenes and with meruaylous woodenes do withſtande and gaynſaye, & do openly teache and ſaye, that thou arte in no perell, thoughe thou doſte poſſeſſe & kepe ſtyll euyll gotten goodes, ſo yͭ thou woldeſt gladly reſtoꝛe them yf thou knoweſt frō whom they were taken, & ſo that thou purchace & bye yͤ popes pardones. I beſeche the what other thyng is this in effecte, then yf a man dyd ſaye, verely thou mayſt ſteale & be a theffe, & god whiche foꝛbad this, was mad. Lo thus the god & loꝛde of maieſtie is cōpelled to be a ſcoꝛnynge ſtocke to theſe chyldꝛē of malediccyō, whō they alſo opēly & euydētly repꝛoue & cōdempne foꝛ a lyer & a fole For this pꝛecept thoſe beaſtes do blaſpheme opēly to his face & cōtrary it (though they wolde cloke oꝛ colour the matyer) they do in very dede teache theftes, roberyes, extoꝛcyons, deceyptes, and fraudes. Go to nowe thou pope of Rome, tell J pꝛaye the, wherby doſte thou clayme & take vpō the ſo moch auctoꝛytie that thou dareſt ſaye, that goodes euyl gotten, oꝛ parte of the goodes euyll gottē is thyne? “God whiche hath created all thynges, and whiche is loꝛde of the earthe, and of the fulnes therof, ſayth/that he wyll not receyue any oblacion of goodes gottē by rauyne oꝛ robberie. And thou farre ỹ moſt cruell tyraunt of all that euer were boꝛne ſyns the fyꝛſte creacyon of man, beynge openly blaſphemous agaynſt ſo great and ſo hygh maieſtie, agaynſt the voyce and cōmaūdemēt of god alyue agaynſt ſo great a pꝛecept, doſte auaunce and lyfte vp thy ſelfe aboue god and doſte take vpon the greatter power and auctorytie, and doſte teache men by thy deuylyſſhe bulles to breake and tranſgreſſe the cõmaundementes of god, and to exercyſe thefte, roberyes, extorcyons, and vſuryes, contrarye to nature and reaſon, and the comẽ iudgement of men. Thus muſt they nedes be caſt downe in to a reprobate ſenſe or iudgemẽt and be vtterly tourned out from god whiche doo condempne the goſpell, and which do brenne the bokes whiche they neuer ſawe, nor loked through, which do violate and breake the publyke faythe or fidelytie, contrary to the lawe of all nacyons, yͤ ſo ronnyng forthe all madde & wood agaynſt god, they ſhulde ſtryke theyr foreheddes agaynſt the ſtumblyng ſtone

Chryſt

Brẽning and condẽpnyng of bokes without readynge of them.

Ro.ix.

Chryſte, and afterwardes do impugne all the wordes and workes of god, and that they ſhulde come to that madnes & extreme blyndnes, that they ſhulde openly teache the breakynge of goddes law. O how excellently, how plenteouſly and myghtely with a ſtretched forthe hande, and an hyghe arme hathe god auenged the contempte of the goſpel: with howe great encreace, & as it were a treaſure or heape of wrathe, he hath requyted this iniurye, ſtrykyng thē wͭ ſo obſtynate mynde with ſo great blyndnes and with ſo great Iſe or coldnes of herte? Here nowe the thyng it ſelfe, and the veray haynouſnes of this offence wolde requyre that not onely the bulles of the pope, but alſo that the verye poſtes and the dores wherupon the ſayd bulles are

yͤ wrathe of god.

are wonte after the cõmen maner tc be hanged vp, beynge roborated and ſtrengthed with manye Cardynalles ſeales, were brente, were ouerthrowen, and brought vnto aſſhes, and ſo vtterly deſtroyed, that there myght be ones ſome ende of theſe abhomynacyõs, wherfore who ſoeuer thou art good chryſten reader, I beſeche the, and requyre the for Chryſtes ſake, doo not ſuffre thy ſelfe to be ſeduced and led out of the ryght waye by theſe ſo cruell and madde beaſtes, remembre that thy god, hath not onely forbeden the dede, ſayenge: Thou ſhalt not ſtele: but alſo he hathe forbydden the affeccyon and deſyre of the herte, ſayenge: Non concupiſces, thou ſhalt not luſte or deſyre, beleue me, he wyll not reuoke his owne worde, how is it poſſyble then, that any man or any creature can gyue the lybertie to haue or to poſſeſſe thy neyghbours goodes.

“ FOr Eſaie ſaythe, I am the
“ god louynge iuſtyce, and
“ I do hate ſacryfycie or ob-
“ lacyon made of ſtolen good or of
“ rauynes.

ANd though theſe foreſayde thynges be opẽly deuylyſſhe yet thoſe wolues doo teache vs not onely to make ſacryfyce of rauyne: but alſo to poſſeſſe ⁊ kepe ſtyll goodes ſtolen or gottẽ by rauyne ⁊ extorcyon. Se howe with theyr blaſphemyes and extreme madneſſes they do brynge in yͤ wrathe of god vpõ the, and condempnacyon vnto helle, and yet ne-yet neuertheleſſe they deſyre and loke for to be called byſſhops, & reuerende fathers in Chryſt, and paſtours or feders of ſoules, flee flee from them my brother, they are wolues. I verely althoughe I be but a wretched pore caytef, as oftentymes as I doo ſe, beholde, & conſydre that blyndnes of byſſhops, I do very oftentymes thynke thus in my mynde, that it is beſt vtterly to holde my tonge, & to leaue them vnto the iudgemēt of god, and not medle with them any thynge at all. For oftentymes ſuche maner thoughtes do come i to my mynde, that all thynges are deſperate, & that there is no hope lefte at all: all good thynges are ſo by thoſe Romyſſhe hypochrytes & very monſters not only feblyſſhed and corrupted but alſo extyncte and vt-

The laſt daye.

terly deſtroyed, in ſo moche they haue vndone the whole worlde drownyng them with ſo great a floode of errours and abhomynacyõs: that there are euydent and playne tokẽs on euery ſyde, that that daye of the lorde is nere at hande. But yet agayne on the other ſyde, that ſo myſerable perdicyon and pyteous deſtruccyon of many ſoules, which thoſe mõſters doo with ſo great crueltie & wͭ ſo great tyranny flee, ſechyng nothynge elles but onely money doth not ſuffre me to be ſtyll and to holde my tonge, but compelleth me to ſpeake, to the entent that yf it may be brought aboute I myght by ſome meanes happely delyuer at the leaſte ſome ſoules from the mouthes of the wolues, yf therfore my brother, thou haſt euyl gotten goodes do not in any wyſe thynke, yͭ thou canſt be excuſed. Reſtore it therfore, for thou ſhalte not chaunge the word of god. It were a good and a godly thynge, yf thou couldeſt by the conſent of thy neyghbours obteyne, that he whome thou haddeſt deceyued wolde forgyue the (for euery man is bounden vnto his neyghboure to forgyuenes) yf peraduenture thou haddeſt any of thy neyghbours goodes, whiche coulde not be reſtored very well and conuenyently vnto hym, nor without greater perel and ieopardye. But concernynge this thou mayſte rede more in other dyuerſe places. Of theſe thynges now geſſe thy ſelfe whether both the pope & alſo his byſſhops haue not very greate nede of an inſtructour to teache them, lykewyſe as we doo teache ignoraunt yonge chyldren, the .x. cōmaundementes, ỷ they myght at the laſte learne, that we ought not to ſtele, nor to deſyre ỷ thyng that belōgeth to our neyghbour, and that moche leſſe they ought to teache other men to exercyſe & vſe theftes, raupnes, extorcyons, & vſuryes. For except they them ſelues doo deſpyſe thoſe madde & furyous bulles of the pope: they are byſſhops in dede, but not of chryſtē men. What ar they then? byſſhops of theues, of robbers, of extorcyoners, of vſurers, chyef capitaynes (I ſay) & defenders, and the authours and counſayllours of great ſynnes and abhomynacyōs, as it is eaſy to know and perceyue by theſe thynges, which we haue alredy ſayd. And it is a myracle or wondre of the dyuyne wrathe and indignacyon many dayes a go prouoked and styrred vp agaynſt vs, that euer theſe thynges coulde haue ben perſwaded vnto any man which are ſo repugnaunt and contrary to the cõmen ſenſe or iudgement and alſo to that blynde lyghte of reaſon. It is lyke a monſtre and a wondre that ſo open and manyfeſt theftes, roberyes, and blaſphemyes of Romanyſtes coulde ſo longe be hydde. And there is no man forſothe, which wolde beleue, that there were euen amõg the Scythyans any men ſo rude and vplandyſſhe, and ſo moche without wytte or perceyuynge, that they wolde haue ſuffred ſo groſſe deceytes: yf it were not ſo, that experyence dyd compell hym to confeſſe, that this dulnes

and

and inſenſybilytie hath ben euen in our owne ſelues, whiche ar yet lyuynge. For what man or woman of Scythia wyll allowe or holde with this that euyll gotten goodes maye be poſſeſſed ⁊ kept by the dyſpenſacyon or bulles of the Pope. Swyne and aſſes, ſtones and ſtockes are ſcante ſo inſenſyble, and ſo moche without perceyuynge, as we haue ben made vnder the pope. And here I knowe well ynoughe, what they are wont to allege ⁊ brynge in for theyr parte agaynſt me. The pope (ſaye they) is the hygheſt byſſhop, and hedde, of all chryſten people generally, throughe out chriſtendome. It belongeth to hym to dyſpenſe of goodes euyll gotten, wherof it is doubted who is the ryght owner here I make anſwere thus. I be ſeche you, where is this in all the ſcryptures? where is it wryten? Is it peraduenture at Rome wᵗ ſaynt Peter in ſome chymney or fornace, as it is cõmenly ſayde? Forſoth, it is an excellẽt lye, why ſhulde not then euery man his owne ſelfe by his owne ſelfe dyſpoſe, accordyng to his owne conſcyence of his owne, whiche way ſoeuer they haue ben gottẽ? what nedeth hym to haue another dyſpenſatour, namely ſuche a tyrannous one as is the pope? It is therfore nothynge elles, but a groſſe and a moſte ſhameles lye ymagyned doubtles for this entente and purpoſe, that the pope myght be made the generall hed of all theues, of extorcyoners, of vſurers, and that ſo by all the handes of all theues, and of all extorcyoners, he myght ſtele and ſnatche awaye more then all the theues vnder heuē and ſo myght be capitayne and chyefe ruler amonge the moſte erraunt theues and extorcyoners of the whole worlde, and amonge ſuche other lyke vnthryftes who ſoeuer they be, yf he were hedde & hygheſt in the churche, he ought accordyng to the enſample of the Apoſtles, to cōmytte the admynyſtracyon euen of honeſt ryches & goodes to other men, to gyue hym ſelfe holy to prayer and to the goſpel, and to ſaye with the Apoſtles.

Act. vi.

IT is not mete yͭ we ſhulde
“ leaue the mynyſterye of the
“ worde of god, and to mynyſtre at the tables.

NOwe he cleane contrarye wyſe chalengeth and taketh vpon hym the care &

buſynes to admynyſtre a ſclaunderfull and vnhoneſt kynde of goodes, theftes, raupnes, vſuryes, and ſuche other godly & holy ryches (yf god be pleaſed) I beſeche the, is not this a worſhypful and a goodly vycar of Chriſt and an excellent ſucceſſour (for ſo he calleth hym ſelfe) of the Apoſtles: why dothe he not by the ſame ryght make hym ſelfe the generall ſtewarde and dyſpenſer of all thynges, what ſoeuer chriſten men haue in any place, and why doth he not adminyſtre thē: ſeynge that he hathe ones taken this auctorytie vnto hym ſelf by this prymacy, that al we beſydes myghte lyue in reſte and ydlenes, and the moſte holye father myght care for, & alſo ordre both vs, and all that euer belongeth to vs. Oh theſe thynges, ought to haue ben done to ſtones and trees, and not to men: thoughe I do ſpeake nothyng in the meane ſeaſon, yͭ theſe thynges are done to chryſten men.

¶ The. iiii. vertue.

The fountaynes of errours.

IN al the bulles of indulgences and pardones, he promyſeth full remyſſyon of ſynnes to all men beynge truely confeſſed and contryte. This is the moſt ſtronge venome and moſte deadely poyſon of moſt peſtylent errour, that euer cam forthe of this founteyne and ſprynge of errours & humayne tradycyons, whiche is the pope. Chryſt in the ix. of Mathewe dyd not ſay to yͤ man dyſeaſed of the palſaye. Go put thy money in to a cheſte, then thy ſynnes be forgyuen the: but he ſayde.

TRuſte or beleue ſonne, thy „
ſynnes are forgyuen the. „

FRom that ſymplycytie and purytie of fayth, and from the ſure and ſtedfaſt truſte or beleue in the grace and promyſes of god, whiche beleue onely dothe iuſtyfye, whiche onelye dothe obteyne remyſſyon of ſynnes, as Paule the Apoſtle dothe declare through out al his epyſtle wryten to the Romanes: from this beleue (I ſaye) that wolfe and abhomynable monſter doth plucke awaye the people, & doth leade them in to truſte and confydence in his bulles, and in deade ware, & in yͤ payenges of certeyn ſommes of money limytted & aſſygned vnto theym, in ſo moche

Truſt in yͤ promyſes of god

that the ſymple hertes do learne to putte theyr confydence not in the grace and mercye of god, promyſed but in theyr owne workes and ſatyſfaccyons. This inuencyon of the deuyl ſo magnyfyenge bulles, is more haynous and abhomynable, then may be expreſſed with wordes, or elles cõpaſſed with mannes thoughtes. For the fyrſte and chyef cõmaundement of god is here condempned and extyncte, by whiche we are cõmaunded to truſt onely to mercye and grace, bryefly to god alone. Nowe they do teache the people to put theyr confydẽce in paper and waxe, and in theyr flaterynge and bawdy lyes, & vpon theſe thynges to buylde theyr cõſcyences. And without doubt the byſſhop of Romes byſſhops yf they had any poynte of a chryſtẽ

mynde,

Fayth.

mynde, they wolde them ſelues (I ſaye teache and preache this faythe) whiche Paule doth well nere in euery ſyllable inculke in to vs, and they wolde alſo ſuffre and exhorte other men to preache the ſame in euery place. Nowe for aſmoche as theſe papyſty call vyſures are rude, folyſſhe, vnlearned, whiche lyke vnto theyr creatoure yͤ Pope are created to the entent that they ſhulde purſue and ſtryue agaynſt the verytye of god (but doubtles though they wolde braſte they ſhall neuer ouercome it) it becometh thē and is ſemely for theyr perſonages, lykewyſe as they be dyſguyſed and hypochrytes: euen ſo alſo to ſuffre deceytes, ſmokes, vyſures, puffed prowde wordes, tryfles, and bryefly mere madneſſes to be preached, and that only for profyte and lucre. Here agayne I deſyre chryſtē reader for Chriſtes ſake, that no man do deſyre her in me temperaunce and meaſurablenes: for as moche as I am prouoked with ſo iuſte grefe. For not without cauſe we chryſten men doo ſorowe with herte and mynde: whiche be dayly compelled to ſe and ſuffre ſo ſhamefull, ſo manyfeſt, and ſo furyous blaſphemye agaynſt god. For euen this one thynge alone the byſſhops were worthy to be far more ſore rebuked of me. For all thynges what ſoeuer I am able to ſaye or to crye out, be they neuer ſo hote, ſo ſore, and ſo vehement: yet are they to lytle for to expreſſe ſcaſely ẏ thouſande part of ſo excedynge and vnmeaſurable madnes. Paule the Apoſtle dothe boldlye condempne bothe hym ſelfe and alſo the aungelles of heuen, yf they wolde teache (I do not ſaye any thynge agaynſt the goſpell) any thynge beſydes that which is pure goſpell, what wolde he thē do now to thoſe mē, whiche do teache not onely beſydes ỹ goſpell: but alſo with more then fantaſtycall madnes, or wᵗ more then deuylyſſhe boldnes do openly teache thynges contrary to the goſpell. And let no man thynke it to be ſpoken agaynſt the eccleſyaſtycal ſtate & agaynſt true byſſhops or good paſtours: what ſoeuer is ſayd agaynſt theſe tyrauntes. Let no man thynke it to be ſayde or done agaynſt the heddes and gouernours of Chryſtes churche: what ſoeuer is ſayde or done agaynſt theſe ſlouthefull ydle and ſluggyſſhe beaſtes gyuen all to the belye.

He rebuketh no vertuous eſtates.

For they are not byſſhops, but playne Idoles and dumbe ymages/ydle puppettes byſurꝭ, blockes/ſhadowes/dyſguyſed game players / which do not ſo moche as knowe what this worde Epiſcopus/ that is to ſaye, byſſhoppe dothe ſygnyfye / ſo farre of they be from knowynge what is the offyce or duytie of a byſſhoppe/ wylte thou that I tell the at one worde what they are : wolues they are, tyrauntes/ traytoures/ manquellers/mõſters of ẏ worlde, burdeynes of the earthe / the apoſtles of Antechryſte, grauẽ & made to corrupte and deſtroye ẏ worlde, and to extincte & deſtroy the goſpell. And to vtter at ones what I thynke: Lo I wyll here playe the bedell or cõmen cryer. Be it knowen to al men, that the byſſhoppes of Rome with theyr clyentes byſſhops whych do now exercyſe tyranny vpon ſo many cyties in moſte ample and large domynyon, are not byſſhops by the ordynacyon of god, but by errour, and by the ſeduccyon of the deuyll, and by the tradycyons of men. Wherfore without doubte they are the meſſangers and vycars of Satan, yf I do not ſhew and proue this by ſo euydent teſtymonyes, that myne enemyes ſhall be conſtrayned to confeſſe this verytie, and that euen themſelues (ſo that they do meanely repent and waxe wyſe) can not denye it: then let thē be byſſhops then let me be thoughte to do iniurye vnto them. Fyrſte Paule wryteth vnto Tite, yͭ he ſhulde conſtytute and ordeyne preſbyteros in euery towne. Here I ſuppoſe that no man can denye that

preſbyter.

all one thynge is ſygnyfyed by this worde breſbyter, and by this worde Epiſcopus in ſaynt Paules wrytinges, for as moch as he dothe bydde Tite that he ſhulde in euery cytie conſtytute preſbyteros. And becauſe a byſſhop ought to be vnreproueable, therfore he calleth hym preſbyterum. It is euydēt therfore what Paule doth ſygnyfye & meane by this worde Epiſcopus: byſſhop, that is to ſaye a man excellently good & vertuous, of rype age, whiche alſo hath a chaſte wyfe, and chyldren obedyent in the feare of the lorde. And the Apoſtle wyll that he ſhulde haue yͤ ouerſyghte and gouernaunce of the congregacyon, in the mynyſterye of the worde and the admynyſtracyon of the ſacramentes. Wherfore it is neceſſarye alſo, that he be learned

Epiſcopus.

ned, and well exercyſed in the ſcriptures, and alſo as touchyng his lyfe, vnreproueable. I beſeche the, is there any man here ſo moche a ſtone, that he can eyther denye theſe wordes of the apoſtle, or elles wreſt them to any other ſenſe, yf he do conſydre and waye well the wordes that goo before, and that folowe after? Beſydes this it pleaſeth me here to aſke one queſtion, whether the worde of ſaynte Paule be the worde of god? whether the ordynacyon of the Apoſtle be the ordynaunce of god? For I am aſſured, that neyther the pope, neyther the deuyll hym ſelfe (althoughe bothe of them do buſylye ſtryue & labour all that euer they can to extyncte & deſtroy the worde of god) dare denye this yͤ the worde of ſaynte Paule.

Paules worde is goddes worde, and that Paules ordynacyon is the inſtytucyon and ordynaunce of the ſpyryte of god. For albeit that the worde of god doth greatly greue the deuyll: yet he dare not denye it, but onely he vſeth theſe ſubteltyes, and deuylyſſhe craftes that vnder yͤ colour and cloke of the worde of god, and vnder hypochryſie, he may doo ⁊ entrepryſe all thynges contrarye to yͤ worde, yf then it be yͤ worde of god and the ordynacion of the holy ghoſte, what ſoeuer Paule doth ſaye or ordeyne: it foloweth that what ſoeuer thynge is done contrary to his worde and ordynacion, the ſame is done agaynſt god, and contrarye to the ordynaunce of the holy ghoſte. Nowe yf it be agaynſt god and his ſpyryte: vndoubtedly it is of the deuyll.

uyll. Coulde this thynge be any more clere? coulde it be more euydēt? is there yet any thyng wherof any man may doubt? For how can god be cōtrarye to hym ſelfe ſeynge that Chryſt ſayth, that. Luce. xi.

EUen the deuyll hym ſelfe is ,,
not repugnaunt, nor contra ,,
rye to hym ſelfe? ,,

SEcondarely it foloweth, that all chryſten men are bounden vnder payne of goddes indygnacyon and of euerlaſtyng deathe, to maynteyne & defende the worde & ordynaunce of god, which ſaynt Paule doth teache. And contrary wyſe agayne they are as moch boundē to impugne to deſtroy, to ouerthrowe, and vtterly to extyncte the ordynaunce of the deuyll, whiche is ſo repugnaunt and contrarye to god and his oꝛdynaunce, and let them ſpede about this yf nede requyꝛe as when they ſhall be called by yͤ hygh powers, both theyꝛ goodes and theyꝛ frendes, and alſo theyꝛ lyfe, and theyꝛ bloode, oꝛ els they can not extyncte and deſtroy it, at the leaſt wyſe let them eſchewe it and flee from it, as from abhominacyon and from the deuyll hym ſelfe. This thyng verely is open and manyfeſt. Foꝛ all thynges are to be foꝛſaken foꝛ the defence and mayntenaunce of the woꝛde of god, that his wyll may be fulfylled both in heuē and in earthe and the errours of the deuyll are to be plucked vp by the rootes afoꝛe all thynges, to the vttermoſt of our power. Herunto now take you hede you biſſhops. Foꝛ in as moche as ye delyte ſo moche in bulles, I ſhall reade vnto you a bull of a newe makynge, I pꝛay god it may pleaſe you.

¶ The bulle of the authoꝛ and refoꝛmacyon.

All men who ſoeuer they be, whiche by all honeſt ⁊ lawfull meanes do ſpende ⁊ beſtowe theyꝛ goodes, honour, bloode, ⁊ lyfe, to yͤ ende that theſe byſſhopꝛykes ſo pompous and courtlye, ſo farre vnlyke ⁊ contrarye to all the offyce ⁊ duetie of an Apoſtle, namely to yͤ mynyſtracion of the woꝛde, ⁊ that all this deuylyſſhe kyngdome of yͤ biſſhop of Rome may be ouerthꝛowen ⁊ deſtroyed oꝛ yf they can not in very dede deſtroye it, doo crye agaynſt it, do dyſpꝛayſe and condempne it, and do auoyde it as abhomynacyon: all thoſe perſones that ſo done, are the ſones of god, and true chꝛyſten men, fyghtynge and helpynge the faythe of the goſpel in ſpyꝛytual batayll agaynſt the gates of hell. Contrarye wyſe, who ſoeuer do fauour the kyngdome of the popes byſchops ſo wycked and that ſo tyꝛannous and deuylyſche crueltie, and do wyllyngly and gladly ſubmyt them ſelues, and obey vnto it: thoſe perſones are the mynyſtres of the deuyll, fyghtynge as enemyes agaynſt the woꝛdes, the lawes, and oꝛdynaũces of god. This ſentence of myne, nay rather of goddes iudgement. I pꝛoue with ſtronge effectuall argumẽtes in this wyſe. The apoſtle Paule cõmaundeth Tite, that he ſchulde oꝛdeyne and conſtytute a byſchop in euery cytie, ſuch one as was yͤ huſbande of one wyfe, a man vertuous, &

vnreprouable. &c. This is the worde, this is the wyll and ſentence of god. Agaynſt this ſayde wyll of god theſe men do nowe ſtryue and fyghte, which haue taken quyte away al true byſſhops out of all cyties, and in ſtede of true byſſhops haue conſtytuted ſhoppes or workehouſes of moſt colde ceremonyes, monaſteryes, and churches collegyate, & haue brought in them ſelues in theyr ſtede, that by this meane they myght be made byſſhops or ouer ſeers of many cyties, and alſo of many prouynces. Nowe the ſentence of Paule, or rather the wordes of the holy ghoſte dothe contynue fyrme, ſtable, and not able to be moued or ſtered of the gates of hel, & doth ſtande as ſtyffe, as a braſen wall, whiche ſaythe playnly and euydently, that in euery cytie there ought to be conſtytuted and ordayned one byſſhop, and theſe then ſhall be euery one of them of egall power with the other. For Paule ſpeaketh playnly of euery cytie, and he gyueth to euery byſſhop full power & auctorytie in his owne cytie. Goo to therfore nowe ye worldly byſſhops. Why do you not here ryſe? Why do you not boldely and manfully reſyſte? why do you not breake forthe all the maynye of you together? here you haue to do not with me, but with ye Apoſtle Paule. Here you reſyſte (that may I ſaye with the holy martyre Steuyn) not me, but the holy ghoſte whiche lykewyſe agayne of his parte dothe myghtely reſyſte you. Go to then what wyll you ſaye here: I beſeche you? wyl you al holde your peace

Act. vii.

peace, and ſaye nothynge at all. Lo your ſentence is gyuen, and pronounced agaynſt you, you haue the matyer iudged, that is to wytte, that, vnto all chryſten men it belongeth, of theyr parte (with the worde of god) agayne to deſtroye, to plucke vp by the rootes, and vtterly to extyncte bothe you and your kyngdome, whiche you do tyrannouſly exercyſe, to extyncte and deſtroye the goſpell, you haue harde nowe that they be in the indygnacyon of god, who ſoeuer fauoureth you: and on the other ſyde that they are in the fauour of god, who ſoeuer ouerthroweth, and deſtroyeth you. But I wylle not in any wyſe theſe wordes, whiche I doo ſpeake of the deſtruccyon and vtter ſubuerſyon of the kyngdome of falſe

byſchops

byſſhops, ſo to be vnderſtanded or taken, as though it ought to be done with the hande, or with ſwerde, or with vyolence, or bodely inuaſyon of them. For with this deſtruccyon of the men, we ſhall be nothynge further in this ſo great a matyer, that is to wyt, goddes cauſe or buſynes But as Daniel prophecyed in the. viii. chapptre.

ye ſe here, yͤ the preachers of yͤ goſpell, teache no ſedycyon, ſheddyng of bloode, or fyghting with the hande

> “ THe kyngdome of antechriſt
> “ is to be broken all to peces
> “ without any hande of man.

ANd it ſhal com to paſſe that euery man ſhall ſpeake and preache agaynſt it by the worde of god, vntyll that wretched ſynfull man be of his owne accorde confounded, and forſaken of all men and ſo do fall downe deade, and be vtterly deſtroyed. This is the very true deſtruccyon belongynge to chryſten men: to the bryngynge of whiche to paſſe, we ought to beſtowe al that euer we haue, or elles maye doo. But here I wyll gyue you metely good counſel (yf you wyl ſo take it) becauſe you ſhall not thynke that I doo vtterly hate all your hole ordre. It is expedyēt for you here to reteyne and hyre, what ſo euer it do coſt you (as you ar byſſhops of golde and of money) ſome excellent craftie lyer, which maye ſo wryte a pleaſaunt lytle boke, lykewyſe as many a foolyſſhe aſſe of your ſorte haue done, as though they could haue chaūged the whole worlde with thoſe wretched papers. For yf the wordes of ſaynt Peter, in whiche he ſpeketh of al chriſtē men ſayeng.

The coūſayl of author.

“ “ YOu are a regall pꝛeſthode and a pꝛeſtly kyngdome.

YF theſe woꝛdes (J ſay) may be wꝛeſted vnto this, that they do ſygnyfye, pꝛeeſtes ſhauen and annoynted, as thoughe Peter wolde that all chꝛyſten men ſhulde be ſuch maner annoynted and ſhauen pꝛeeſtes: what thyng dothe let yͭ Paules woꝛdes may not by the ſame crafte (ſe yͭ a craftes man haue yͤ handelyng of it which is inferioꝛ to no mã in lyes ⁊ vnſhamefaſtnes) haue yͤ necke of them wꝛythen, ⁊ ſo be applyed to this ſenſe, as thoughe we ought to vnderſtande it of two maner byſſhops, ſo yͭ ſpyꝛytuall byſſhops after yͤ expoſycyon are all the pꝛeachers of the woꝛde of god in cyties, townes, ⁊ vyllages, althoughe they doo neyther bye palle, noꝛ gowne, ne yet any

Spyꝛytuall byſſhops.

other

Corporal byſſhops.

other garment of thoſe bawdes the Romanyſtes. And the corporall byſſhops are you which bearyng forked myters on your heddes vnder yͤ apparayll of Aaron doo in very dede playe yͤ veraye ſtarke tyrauntes, & are felowes vnto Nero & Caligula, rydynge vpō fatte & wel fedde palfrayes, and ſlyke mules, & afterwardes with your rynges onely, & your gloues, & your ſyluer ſhepehoke (yf god be pleaſed) you do playe the byſſhops. Now yf Paule beynge god wot but a ſymple & an abiecte creature, wolde refuſe & dyſalowe this gloſe, or expoſyciō of ſo holy fathers: he were worthy to be ſtryken with yͤ ſpyritual ſwerde of excommunicacion, & to be feared with the indignacyon at the leaſte wyſe of ſaynt Peter, for as moche as he is gyltie here in this thyng after yͤ ſtyle of the Romane bulles, or elles at yͤ leaſte wyſe he were worthy to be honeſtly rewarded with a good buffet on the eare, lykewyſe as Ananias the byſſhop dyd vnto hym For why ſhuld not he being but one ꝑſon alone, be content to be taught & to learne of ſo many holy fathers: why ſhuld not they with a prowde contenaunce by theyr auctorytie cōmaunde ſylence and ſaye. Paule I ſaye be content to be admonyſſhed and counſaylled. That worde cytie dothe betoken there by the determynacyon of yͤ church of Rome, and of vs an hole prouynce or kyngdome. For yf it be lawfull and free for the pope to chaunge the true ſenſe of ſcripture, which the wordes and argumentes do declare & fortyfye: why ſhulde it not alſo be ī his lybertie & power, after his owne luſt and pleaſure to chaunge and tourne clene contrary wayes bothe yͤ wordes and the vocabules of the ſame. For wordes (to vſe theyr owne paradoxe) doo ſygnyfye at pleaſure. Wherfore as ſoone as it ſhall pleaſe any ſuch ſo myghtie, and ſo well mytred and hatted a papyſte, or as ſooue as it ſhal come to his mynde vpon his wyne benche: both the Greke and alſo the Latyne lettres and wordes, ſhall be conſtrayned to goo in to an other nature, ſo that yf it lyke them well, from henſforthe this worde garden ſhall betoken a cytie, and a ſtarre, a ſtabule, and an aſſe, a man. And yf any man, that thynketh hym ſelfe wyſe, wyl here obiecte agaynſt me and ſaye, hytherto thou haſte rebuked the pope, and now thou dyſ-

Wordes do ſygnyfy at pleaſure.

Garden.
Cytie.
Starre.

prayſeſt yͤ byſchops, what then? wylte thou alone confunde, mengle, and tourne all thynges vp and downe? Here I ſaye, who ſoeuer thou arte that doſte thynke theſe thynges, be thou thy ſelfe whiche arte the dyſputer) bothe iudge and vmpyer, I ſaye I appeale vnto the thy ſelfe as iudge, all affeccyons layde aparte, gyue thou thyne owne ſelfe the ſentence. Maye I not by ryght, here make that anſwere vnto the byſchops, whiche Helyas made to kynge Achab in the .xviii. chapitre of yͤ thyrde boke of kynges?

mingle

Helias.
Achab.

“IT is not I that troble & diſquyet Iſrael, but you. &c.

who tourneth all thynges vp ſette downe.

I Say diſcerne and iudge thy ſelfe, whether of vs is here in the defaulte, & whether I do tourne all thyngꝭ vp & downe and the wronge waye, ſo as they do compleyne (which do teache yͤ worde of god, yͤ clere ordenaunce and decre of yͤ holy ghoſt) or elles they which teachyng theyr owne ordynacyon, do extyncte yͤ ordynaunces of god. ¶Tel me whether of theſe two thynges is more tollerable, whether leſſe agaynſt equytie yͭ they ſhulde ouertourne & deſtroy yͤ ordinaunce of god: or elles yͭ I do ouerthrowe and caſt downe yͤ deuylyſſhe furyes and madneſſes of them, & theyr erroneous & humane ordynaunces: do not conſydre here what I do, but conſydre yͤ very thynges ſelues, wherupon I do pryncipally groũde, which of them ſelues do this thyng yͭ is to wyt yͤ worde of god, & the ſcriptures. ¶The preacher ought not ſo moch to regard and conſydre what maner men,

The offyce & duetie of a preacher.

howe great, howe myghtie they be, agaynſt whome he doth preache, or what he may gette by his ſermones, but this thynge onely and nothynge elles he ought to care for, that he may preache the pure word of god, for this is not to be watred, or to be attempred, and made to agre vnto the affeccyons of men, what ſoeuer thynges maye chaunce, or elles maye be feared to be done vnto hym of man. This worde I ſay is purely and ſyncerely to be preached, althoughe not onely ẙ byſchops but alſo all the aungelles of heuen wolde reſyſte & ſaye agaynſt it. Nowe yf thou wylte here agayne obiecte, that they are very great, very hygh, very wyſe, and very well learned men after the worldely iudgemente, agaynſt whome I do wryte theſe thyngꝭ:

I anſwere vnto the, Peter, Paule, and all the prophetes dyd prophecye before, that there ſhulde not come a more and vengeable myſchyef vpon the earthe, then that of Antechryſte and of yͤ laſt dayes. Doſt thou ſuppoſe theſe ſo hyghe wordes of yͤ holy ghoſt to haue ben ſpoken of the leues of trees, or of ſmall tryfles? The worde of god (as it appereth in the prophetes) alwayes ſpeaketh agaynſt kyngdomes, agaynſt peoples, of great thynges, agaynſt them that are the heddes amonge the people, agaynſt many ⁊ great nacyons, whiche way ſoeuer thou doſt loke: they are vtterly great and wonderfull thynges, wherof god dothe ſpeake. How moch more lykely is it thã, that they ſhulde be great, noble, worſhypfull, and very wyſe men as concernyng the fleſſhe: which ſhall be the doers and workers of this extreme myſchyef of the laſt dayes, wherof all the prophetes haue prophecyed and ſpoken before: namely ſeynge that the ſcripture dothe ſpeake ſo horryble thynges of theſe tymes.

“ That is to wytte, yͭ no fleſſhe
“ ſhall be ſaued, except thoſe
“ dayes were ſhortened. And in an
“ other place, that the ſone of man
“ at his cōmyng ſhal ſcaſely fynde
“ any fayth vpon earthe. And alſo
“ that euen the very electe and cho
“ ſen perſones ſhulde be ſeduced,
“ and led out of the ryght waye, yf
“ it were poſſyble.

I Beſeche & requyre the good chryſten reader, I beſeche the for Chryſtes ſake, conſydre well, ⁊ waye theſe wordes. For they are not wordꝭ ſpoken of any lyghte perſone vpon his ale or wyne benche, neyther yet any inuencyons of mannes mynde: but the wordes of yͤ eternal maieſtie. For yf thou do cōſydre theſe wordes ſtedfaſtedly ⁊ with good aduyſemēt, thou ſhalt fynde yͭ they ſhal be great men, ⁊ mē of myght ⁊ power, ⁊ that it ſhal be a myghtie kyngdome, which ſhal do and worke this laſt great ⁊ moſt ſore ⁊ vengeable miſchyef as yͤ pope, his byſchops, ⁊ other his prelates are in very dede, bryefly what matyer I praye you maketh it, how great, how hygh, ⁊ how connyng they are: ſeynge yͭ it is more euydent and clere then daye that all they and theyr doctryne is agaynſt god? Is not god greater and hygher then all creatures?

the turke.

The great Turke alſo is a great lorde of many prouynces, & greater then is any of them: and yet he is agaynſt god, and yͤ enemye of god. And here agayne I geſſe what they wyll obiecte. For all that (ſaye they) oftentymes manye ſayntes haue ben byſſhops not onely of one cytie: but of many cyties. I make anſwere. As many as haue ben holy biſſhops in very dede and called paſtours by the callynge of god: all thoſe for the moſte parte were the byſſhops of one cytie alone, as Cypriane, Hilary, Ambroſe, Auguſtyne, Hireneus, and theſe obſerued the tradycyon of the Apoſtles, it is founde in dede in hyſtoriographers, that there haue ben certeyne (ſuche was holy Boniface, and ſuche alſo Tite vnto Paule) whiche dyd after theyr

Boniface.
Tite.

owne iudgemēt conſtytute other byſſhops in the cyties, as Titus dyd: but yet were they not therfore the byſſhops of many cyties And albeit that ſuche maner example coulde be ſhewed of the ſayntes: ſhall the examples of holy men be preiudycyal to yͤ worde of god? Is not god greater then all ſayntes, howe oftentymes do we fynde that holy men haue ſynned and erred? God ſaued Daniel in the dungeon of Lyons, & he ſaued Ananias, Azarias, and Miſael in the flamynge fornace of Babylō. Is yͤ hande or power of god nowe ſhortened and mynyſſhed? Is it any doubte but that he myght preſerue and kepe his electe and choſen perſones, yf it ſhulde happen them by any meanes to be ſeduced, & led out of the ryght waye (as Chriſt pro=

The examples of holy men maye not be preiudicyall to goddes holy worde. For all men may erre.

God ſaued Daniel in the dungeon of Lyons Dani. vi Dani. iii.

phecyed) euen in the myddes of mennes ordynacyons ⁊ tradycyons, ⁊ of the errours of the deuyll ⁊ we ought not to put confydence in any enſample, dede, or worde of ſayntes: but our conſcyences ought to leane ⁊ to be grou͠ded onely vpon yͤ worde of god, which only is he (as Paule ſaith) that can not lye. But let vs furthermore here Paule, what he ſayth of this ordynaunce of god, for in this wyſe Luke wryteth of hym in yͤ .xx. chapytre of yͤ Actes.

Nota.

“ And ſendynge meſſangers
“ from Miletum to Epheſus,
“ he ſent for preeſtes of the church,
“ whiche when they were come to
“ hym, he ſayd vnto them. Take he-
“ de to your ſelues ⁊ to all yͤ flocke
“ in which yͤ holy ghoſt hath ſet or
“ ordeyned you byſſhops, to gouer-
ne the

ne the churche of god, whiche he „
hath purchaſed and gotten with „
his owne blode. „

* * *

GO to now, is here any new thyng? Js Paule a foole, & doth he not know what he doth? Epheſus was but one citie alone and Paule calleth openly all the preeſtes or elders by one comon name Epiſcopos: byſſhops. But peraduenture Paule had not red thoſe bokes & thoſe Apologies wretchedly patched together of papyſtes, nor yͤ holy decretalles. For how wold he haue ben bolde elles to make many byſſhops ouerſeers to one cytie, & to call all yͤ preeſtes of one cytie byſſhops, in as moche as they were not all prynces, neyther kept a garde of mē, & goodly palfrayes, but were
certeyne

Al yͤ preeſtes of one cytie be called of Paule byſſhops.

certeyne raſcall perſones, and of yͤ moſte abiecte and vyle ſorte of men, after yͤ worldly eſtymacyō. For Paule peraduenture was ignoraūt of that, which is growen in vſe nowe in our tyme, that no man can be a great byſſhop in very dede, oneles he doo (as the Poete ſaythe) kepe an hundred horſes in goodly ſtables, oneles he haue a gorgyous houſe ful of royall pompe, onles he haue many royall tytles of lordſhyppes. For this alone is ſuffycyent now in our tyme, to that that knyghtes and prynces (be they neuer ſo moche vnlearned and foolyſhe, yea and thoughe theyr myndes otherwhyles do ſtande nothyng towardes it) may by the cōmendacyōs of theyr parentes & kynſfolkes, and otherwhyles by gyftes and rewardes be ſodeynly made byſſhops. But in good ſadnes. Thou ſeyſt pleynly that the Apoſtle Paule doth cal theſe onely byſſhops, whiche doo preache the goſpell vnto the people, and do mynyſtre vnto them the ſacramentes, as nowe in our tyme be the paryſſhe preeſtes and yͤ preachers, wherfore I do not doubte but theſe, although they do preache the goſpell, but to very lytle vyllages and graunges, and yf they be the faythful and true mynyſters of the worde: I doo not doubte (I ſaye) that they haue by good ryght the tytle and name of a byſſhoppe. Contraryewyſe thoſe valyaunt horſemē and tyrānous byſſhops haue no poynt of yͤ offyce of a byſſhop, ſauynge onely thoſe bare goodly tytles, & certeyne diſguyſed apparayll, in lyke maner as thoſe byſſhops which

All true preachers ben byſſhops.

whiche are paynted on a wall, haue in dede the ſhape and lykenes of byſſhops, but they are without lyfe and ſpeache. For euen ſuch deade and ydle ſtockes and blockes are the popes byſſhops in euery poynt: albeit that then they are ouer more ſtronge and quycke whē they do exercyſe tyrannous crueltie agaynſt the very paſtours, which do buſylye gouerne cyties in the mynyſtracyon of the worde of god, and by more then deuylyſſhe tyranny do forbede them holy wedlocke, & to the open ſclaunder of the church do wynke at yͤ kepyng of whores do blaſpheme the goſpell, do extyncte the worde of god, & vnder the pretence & colour of vertue and godlynes do with incredyble wodnes exercyſe contynually extreme tyranny vpon the ſely pore people. By yͤ reaſon wherof we doo ſe in the courtes & palayces of ſome byſſhops , lykewyſe as in yͤ fountayne of al vyce and myſchyef yͤ courte of Rome , not ſo moche as one crūme , not ſo moch as the leaſte ſhat owe to be founde of chryſten maners, we ſe alſo al the cyties of preeſtes, and namely thoſe noble ſeates of preſtes , to be nothyng elles but ſcoles of vnclenlynes & bodely pleaſures, warkehouſes of vyces , in ſo moch yͭ in compariſon of theyr houſes the courtes of yͤ ſeculare prynces maye be accompted monaſteryes and holy ſcoles of vertue & godlynes , yea & Sodome and Gomorre in comparyſon of them may ſeme tēperate meaſurable, & thryftye. For out of theyr courtes or houſes cōmeth forthe neyther the goſpel, nor any other holy doctryne:but only citaciōs,

the courte of Rome.

excō=

excõmunycacyons, exaccyons, interdyccyons, cytacyons (J ſaye) in very dede peremptorie, that is to ſay ſleers both of goodes and of ſoules. For ſuche as the byſſhops are them ſelues, ſuche alſo is theyr doctryne. And thoughe thou do neuer ſo moch clothe an aſſe with a lyons ſkynde: yet he contynueth ſtyll an aſſe, and an ape is ſtyll an ape, althoughe he be cladde in purple, beſydes this ſaynt Paule wryteth to the Philippians in this wyſe.

Prouerbes.

Philippi

“ Paule and Timothe the ſeruauntes of Jeſu Chryſt, to
“ all the ſayntes in Chryſte Jeſu,
“ whiche are in the cytie Philippi
“ and to the byſſhops alſo and the
“ deacons. &c.

Lo Philippi was but onely one cytie, and yet ſaynt

Paule ſaluteth all them that beleueth, together with the byſſhops, vndoubtedly yͤ byſſhops, whome he meaneth there, were the preeſtes, lykewyſe as he was wonte to conſtytute and ordeyne in all the other cyties. This is nowe the thyrde place of Paule, in which we do ſe, what god and the holy ghoſte hath conſtytuted and ordeyned, that is to wytte, that they onely are called byſſhops in verye dede, & by ryght, whiche do take & beare the charge of the people in the admynyſtracyon of goddes worde/in carynge for the pore flolke/in yͤ admynyſtracyon of the ſacramẽtes as are nowe in our dayes yͤ chryſten curates or paryſſhe preeſtes yf they myght be ſuffred for thoſe mytred horſe men. And yͭ this belongeth to the offyce of a byſſhop,

Curates or paryſſhe preſtꝫ.

Epiſcopus.

ſhop, the very worde it ſelfe doth verye well declare/ For this worde Epiſcopus is deryued of. ii. greke wordes, Epi, and Scopin whiche ſygnyfye to gyue attendaunce to ouerſe, to gyue dylygēce, to playe yͤ keper or watche mā ouer the people, in lyke maner as watche men do kepe watche vpō the walles of a cytie/ or as ſhepeherdes doo kepe watche vppon theyr ſhepe. And epiſcopus ī greke dothe properly ſygnyfye in englyſſhe an ouerſeer/ and in the hebrue it ſygnyfyeth a vyſytoure, yͭ is to ſaye, one whiche vyſyteth men at theyr owne houſe, & doth dylygently enquyre and ſearche the condycyon of theym, and the ſtate of theyr lyfe, beynge redye egally and indyfferently to helpe and comforte all men. So Chryſte ſaythe in the. xix. chapytre of

Mat.

> BEcauſe thou haſte not knowen the tyme of thy vyſytacyon.

THat whiche is there called, tyme of vyſytacyon/ we cal ẏ tyme of thy byſſhopriche. But oure papyſtycall byſſhops haue founde and deuyſed a certayne newe proffe and declaracyon of that Epiſcopall offyce, ſemelye for ſuche as they are / that is to ſytte theym ſelues a hyghe in a chayre gylted, cladde in purple, with cuſſhens of cloth of tyſſue vndre theyr buttockes and theyr elbowes, hauynge habundaunce and plentye of all maner delytes and pleaſures, as moche as any kynges can haue: and in the meane ſeaſon to offre and

Officialles.

ſette forthe the men belongynge to theyr gouernaunce, to be pylled, tormẽted, and ſlayne of theyr offycyalles (to whom they make theyr flockes ſubiectes (men for the moſte parte wycked, vngodly, & whiche do thynke that there is no god/ whiche then may alſo with theyr cõmaundementes at theyr owne pleſure by cõpulſyon cauſe to appere at thoſe theyr holy conſiſtories, perſones yͤ dwelle very farre of, not without damage and hurte both in goodes & in theyr ſoules/and may exercyſe & vſe all maner of extreme tyrãnye vpon theym. For as moche then as nowe it is euydent and open of theſe thre places of yͤ apoſtle, that thoſe byſſhops, whiche are ſo farre away from mynyſtracyon of goddes worde, and be neglygent aboute theyr duetie, are not onely no true byſſhops, but rather the people of malediccion before god, as the men which haue ſetled theyr myndes agaynſte the ſtatutes and ordenaunces of god to extyncte the goſpell, and do exalte them ſelues to deſtroye ſoules. It is euery chryſten mannes duetie by al lawfull and honeſt meanes that he may, to procure that theyr tyrannous & ſynfull tradycyons, may ones be vtterly contynued and come to confuſyon. It belongeth (I ſaye) to euery chryſtē mānes duetye manfully and with great confydence and boldnes where charyte wyll ſuffre without offendynge yͤ weake to endeuoure hym ſelfe to do all thynges whiche are contrary to theyr tradycyons, none otherwyſe then he wolde do agaynſte the deuyll hym ſelfe. And alſo to trede vnder the feete and vtterly deſpyſe the obedyence of theym, by whiche they deſyre to haue, theyr owne tradycyons greatlye regarded and obſerued, the worde of god neglected and nothynge ſette by) euen as they wolde treade vnder theyr feete the very deuyll hym ſelfe. All we therfore (yf it ſo be that we haue pytie of ſo many ſoules whiche do peryſſhe for euer, yf we be earneſtlye moued and ſtyrred with the worde of god) owe with oure vttermoſte dylygence to go aboute, & with very great contencyon and ſtraynig of our ſelues to labour aboute this, that there maye agayne accordynge to the inſtytucyon of the apoſtle, very byſſhoppes & ſhepeherdes be cõſtytuted euery where in cyties, whiche be

Old euyl Biſſops to be charitably reformed & yf yͤy refuſe to be refor men pure, & vertuous, and well learned in holy ſcrypture, and in ſpyrytuall thynges/whiche haue chaſte wyues, and chyldren obedyent (as the apoſtle ſaythe) in the feare of the lorde. Wherfore ſeynge that the byſſhoppes and paſtours euery where in the Cyties, which are nowe a dayes, haue hytherto rather obeyed the deuyll then god, byndynde theymſelues, agaynſte the ſcrypture, to this wycked vowe of lyuynge, ſyngle, or ſole (yf there be any poynte of chryſten breſte or mynde in vs) we ought to gyue dylygence and beſtowe labours, for a reformacion of yͤ ſame to be had, by the kynge our onely ſupreme hedde of the churche, in whome onely the reformacyon lyeth, ſo that ones ſuch a reformaciō had,

med, then newe and good byſſhopes to be put in theyr places.

the pore captyue ſoules may bollye, to contempte of the deuyll, & his papyſtycall tradycions, reuoke thoſe vowes, as beynge throughe errour made with yͤ deuyll and with the very gates of helle, and that they may accordynge to the worde of god wedde wyues/ and rather be wyllyng (accordynge to yͤ inſtytucion of ſaynt Paule) to be good maryed men in the ſyghte of god, then for the pleaſure of thoſe baudes the Romanyſtes to be adulterers and hore kepers. For the verye tyme it ſelf doth now in ſo great reuelacyon of the goſpell requyre that ones at the laſte the holye ordynacyon of the ſpyryte of god, whiche can not be but very good, ſhuld be reſtored and ſette vp agaynſt thoſe prophane and abhomynable tradycyons of men. Loo this is my decre agaynſt thoſe pꝛowde puffed Bulles of the deuyll, and of the deuylyſſhe Romanyſtes and theyꝛ fautours. Neyther do they here and obey me, but they here & obey god and the ſpyꝛyte of god: who ſoeuer do here & obey this. And therfoꝛe I can alſo in verye dede pꝛomyſe both euerlaſtynge lyfe, and alſo the fauoure of god to all thoſe, what ſoeuer they be that do in fayth obſerue and kepe it. And becauſe this ſhall not be iudged yͤ oꝛdynacyon of Paule alone/ (Foꝛ it is repoꝛted, that the deane & chanons of a certayne cathedꝛall churche dyd ſay after a blaſphemous maner & faſcyon, openly to a pꝛecher, whom they dyd expulſe foꝛ the goſpell ſake, what of paule? what of paule? The pope hath receyued moꝛe power of Chꝛyſte then euer Paule dyd

The decre of the authoꝛ.

Chanons and Chanonlyke.

le dyd) and for yͤ pleaſure of thoſe ſo ſwete and gentyll men and excellently deuylyſche preeſtes, let vs ſe what Peter, & what Chryſte hym ſelfe do ſaye concernyng this matyer. In yͤ fyfte chapitre of the fyrſte epyſtle of Peter, it is thus wryten.

Preſbiteros.

The preſtes that are amonge you I beſeche (whiche am
“ alſo my ſelfe a preſte, and a recor
“ de of the afflyctyons of Chryſte,
“ and alſo a parte taker of the glo-
“ rye, whiche ſhall be ſhewed) fede,
“ aſmoch as lyeth in you to do, the
“ flocke of Chryſt takyng the char
“ ge and ouerſyght of them not by
“ compulſyon, but wyllynglye.
“ Not for the deſyre of fylthy lucre
“ but of a good fauourable and lo
“ uynge mynde/ neyther as mē ex-
“ ercyſynge domynyon, in theyr in
“ here-

heretaũces but that you maye be ,,
your ſelues enſample to yͤ flocke. ,,
¶ And when the hedſchepeherde ,,
ſhall appere, you ſhal receyue an ,,
incorruptyble crowne of glorye. ,,
Here thou ſeyſt that. ,,

PEter, euẽ lykewyſe as Paule dyd, dothe vſe theſe two wordꝭ preſbyter and Epiſcopus bothe for one thynge / that is to wytte, that they are Epiſcopi, whiche do teache the people, and do preache the worde of god/and he maketh theym all of egall power one with another/and he forbyddeth theym to behaue theym ſelues ſo, as yf they were lordes, or hadde domynyons ouer thoſe whom they haue charge of, he calleth hym ſelf a felowe preeſt, (yᶠ I may ſo ſay) by theſe wordes euydẽtly declarynge & prouyng, that all paryſſhe pꝛeeſtes ⁊ byſſhops of cyties are of egall power amōge them ſelues, and as touchyng to yͤ auctoꝛytie of a byſſhop, that one is nothynge ſuperyoꝛ to an other, and that he hym ſelfe alſo is felowe pꝛeeſt with theym, and hath nomoꝛe power and auctoꝛytie in his owne cytie then haue yͤ other oꝛ euery one of theym in theyꝛ owne congregacion. Lo peter maketh hym ſelfe egall ⁊ not ſuperyour to the byſſhops/ what I beſeche you wyll thoſe beaſtes allege here agaynſt theſe thyngꝭ whiche do not ceaſe not onely to be loꝛdes and haue domynyon, but alſo to exercyſe moſte cruell tyꝛannye vpon our ſoules ⁊ our goodes/ which alſo do neuer ceaſe with excedynge madde bꝛaulynges and ſuytes to contende ⁊ ſtryue amōge them ſelues about the dyfference, ⁊ degrees of power ⁊ auctoryte. And that I maye ones make ⁊ ende, Chryſte hymſelfe in the. xxii. chapytre of Luke ſaythe.

THe prynces of yͤ paynymes ”
are lordes ouer theym, and ”
they whiche haue power and au= ”
ctorytie ouer theym are called be ”
nefycyall and gracyous / but it ”
ſhall not be ſo amonge you / but ”
he that is eldeſt amonge you, let ”
hym be made as yongeſt. ”
”

HEreunto, herken and gyue good attendaũce you pompous ⁊ lordly byſſhops. To all yͤ hole Chryſten people requyre of you a reaſon ⁊ cauſe of your domynacyon and lordſhyp, whiche you haue hytherto with ſo many tytles and alſo with ſo many tyrannous dedes taken, vyolently vſurped, & chalenged vnto your ſelues/ Lo I ſay yͤ chryſten worlde requyreth a cauſe of this your doynge/ for this you can not denye whiche is ſo open & euydent afore yͤ iyes of all men, that your kyngedome is an outwarde and a worldlye kyngedome/ yea and that more worldly, then the kyngdome of any worldly prynce. For you play the lordes openly bothe vpon the bodyes, and alſo the myndes/and that not by the worde of god, but by exteryour pompe/by exteryour and worldly tyrannye/ as other prynces and rulers of the hethen people do/ I ſaye go to therfore nowe and tell me, howe thoſe wordes of Chryſt vos autem non ſic/ that is, but Vos non ſic.

ſo ſhall not you do/howe do they agree with that your kyngdome go to nowe becauſe you ſhall not (as you are verye ſlypper) ſlyppe from me: let vs enſerche and ponder well the naturall ſtrengthe and ſygnyfycatyon of the wordes, what is the meanyng of theſe wordes. But you not ſo: For here vndoubtedlye is rebuked your kyngdome, and your condycyon and ſtate. For this ought not to be ſuche a one as it is, yf it were a Chryſten ſtate.

¶ Nowe lette it be what ſoeuer maner one you wyll: yet for all that Chryſte ſpekynge of the domynacyon of thoſe worldly prynces, ſayth playnlye vnto you (for you wyl ſeme to be byſſhoppes.)

But you ſhall not do ſo / tell me I ſaye, do not bothe your eares ryng and glowe at theſe wordes of the ſoueraygne maieſtie, but you ſhal not ſo/why do you kepe ſcylence? why are you dumbe? Nowe let vs ſe what you begyn to anſwere wᵗ ſo many great bokes of decretalles vnto theſe wordes of one ſillable vos autem nō ſic. But you not ſo? I ſaye to you what can you ſay to this litle ſentence of thre ſillables, vos nō ſic, you not ſo? peraduenture, as you are bolde to do and ſay all thynges/ſuche is the madnes of you) you wyll begyn to make a cauyllacyon as though theſe wordes/ vos non ſic, were as moch to ſay as ye ſhall do ſo, for ſo ye be wonte to chaunge at your pleaſures the ſygnyfycacyon of wordes. And ſhall teache, that the Pope hath

The papyſtꝫ wyl kepe the true ſignificaciō of wordꝫ no lōger thē they lyſte hath alſo more power and auctorytye then Chryſt hym ſelfe. But why do I thus rebuke thoſe obſtynate perſones? They are blynde and guydes of the blynde/ I wyll here earneſtly aduertyſe the good gentyl reader, that thou do leaue and forſake theſe men, and euen lykewyſe as yf thy deadely foo and enemye dyd come vnto the vndre the ſemblaunce and lykenes of a moch dearlye beloued brother, thou woldeſt at the leaſt wyſe haue hym in ſuſpectyō, and woldeſt with great dylygence eſchewe his company: euen ſo now flee from thoſe tourmentours of conſcyences, and haue theym in ſuſpectyon, whiche do come vndre yͤ vyſures and tytles of true byſſhops and be none. For Paule hathe ſhewed before that lykewyſe as the deuyll doth tranſfygure hym ſelfe in to an Aungell of lyght, euen ſo thoſe his Apoſtles ſhulde take vpon theym the lykenes and the name of the mynyſters of Juſtyce, and of the Apoſtles of Chryſte / but by theyr fruytes, that is to ſaye, by theyr workes and theyr doctrynes we do knowe them. For they do not preache nor ſuffre to be preached any other thynges, then lucre/ and yͤ cheſtes and coffres of Indulgences and pardons.

¶ The fyfte vertue of the Bulle of the byſſhop of Rome.

The Pope taketh vpõ hym power and auctorytie to chaunge vowes, in to other good workes, and that not frelye and for nothynge, but for money: but yet

For money vowes be chaũged.

yet alwayes the vowes are excepted of goynge to ſaynte James, to Rome, to Hyeruſalem, and alſo the vowe of chaſtytie. Many thynges ben heretofore wryten concernynge vowes whiche be nothynge nedefull to be reherſed here agayne in this place. But yf I do here demaunde of the Pope of Rome, that blynde hedde, and begynne to call ſore vpon hym for an anſwere, what is the cauſe that he dare diſpence with certeyne vowes onely, and not with all vowes indyfferentlye. I knowe well ynoughe, he knowethe not what other anſwere to make, then that of the thynges whiche are vowed ſome are greate, as for example, to lyue chaſte: and ſome agayne are ſmalle thynges and of no greate wayghte, as for example to faſte

A queſtyon concernynge vowes.

breade and water. And therfore he maye chaunge the vowe of lytyll thynges, but not lykewyſe of great thynges / Lo howe ſtarke blynde this people of vyſures is, and without eyther wyt or brayne: whiche do eſteme and iudge the wayght and value of vowes not accordyng to the vertue and ſtrength of goddes cōmaundement, but accordyng to workes. But I pray the tell me, is it not an othe aſwell, when thou ſwereſt depely in a matier of thre halfepens as yf thou haddeſt ſworne in a matyer of an hundred talentes? Is not the Relygion and ſtrength of the othe in all poyntes egall in bothe thoſe thynges why then ſhulde it not be egally kepte bothe in lytle thynges and in great thynges: Shuld it therfore be broken in a great ſūme, be cauſe it is an harder thynge to pay an hundred talentes, then to pay thre halfepens. ¶This people therfore of vſures is pleynlye madde, and in all poyntes ſtarke furyous wood, wherfore embrace thou this ſubſtancyall and fyrme and ſtable ſentence.

¶Neuer make thou in mans lawe any difference of vowes as cōcernynge the bygnes or ſmalnes of the worke ſelfe, as though one vowe were dyſpenſable, and another indyſpenſable. For the bonde, relygyon, and ſtrength of the vowe, is of lyke effycacytie and ſtrength aſwell in great thynges as in lytell thynges, ſo that the vowe of lyuynge ſole without a wyfe, maye as well be diſpenſed with all as yͤ vowe to Jeruſalē. For in the one, the othe, and promyſe is ſworne, and made as depelye and erneſtly as in the other and ought therfore to be performed the one aſwell as the other. ¶This ſhalbe more eaſy to perceyue yf we cõpare the nature of mãnes lawe wͭ the nature of godes lawe. ¶The nature of goddes lawe is ſuche, that it maye not be diſpenſed with al, eyther in great thynges or lytell thynges, as all good chryſten men graunt. Neyther doth it make any dyfference betwene great thynges ⁊ ſmalle thynges, ſayinge. ¶Thou mayſte leaue vndone the vowes of lytel thynges, but the vowes of great thyngꝭ thou ſhalte be compelled to kepe obſerue and fulfyll, nor yet contrarywyſe. ¶Thou muſte obſerue and kepe the vowes of ſmalle thynges, but as for the vowes of paynfull, greate, and heuye thynges, thou mayſte leue vndone and be dyſpenſed with all. The lawe of god ſaythe not ſo I ſaye, but byndethe all men indyfferentlye to the obſeruacyon therof vnder the payne of dānacyon without any remedye of mānes dyſpenſacyon. Wherfore in mānes lawe, whoſe force and ſtrength may not be lyke, the contrarye muſte nedes be true, that all other vowes not conteyned within the precept of god, as the vowe to lyue ſole without a wyfe, to vyſyte Saynt James in cōpoſtella, with all other ſuche lyke, and all monkyſſhe, monyſſhe, and freerryſſhe vowes, be they greate or ſmalle, be clerelye dyſpenſable, and maye be broken as well one as an other, as well the greate as the ſmalle.

Or els muſte the byſſhop of Rome and his fautours, the lordes of ſuch vowes and lawes confeſſe and defende, theyr lawes to be of the ſame nature that is the lawe of god, that is to wytte, that they may not be dyſpenſed with all, & yͭ they them ſelues ben moreouer in that poynte checke mate with god in power, yea in euery poynte, where in theyr lawe is (as they ſay) indyſpenſable. And for aſmoche as nothynge in any condycyon can be egall to god but that nedes that ſame thynge alſo muſt be god, it argueth then that, that ſynfull man of Rome, with any ſuch as he is, whiche in any degree or poynte ſhall take vpon them to be of lyke & egall power with god, muſte of neceſſytye make them ſelues goddes, all thoughe it be but halfe goddes,

des, quarter goddes, peſyd goddes, and patched goddes, yea falſe goddes and Idoles.

¶ Wherfoꝛe do not in any wyſe good reader gyue credence to theſe deceyuers. Neyther do thou truſte and put confydence in thoſe byenges and ſellynges of dyſpenſacyons, and commutacyons of vowes. Foꝛ they haue none auctoꝛytye, wherbye they maye chaũge any vowe cõteyned within the woꝛde of god. Foꝛ where they maye chaunge vowes as in thynges of mannes inuencyon and in thynges indyfferent, there maye thou thy ſelfe & any other man who ſoeuer he be do the ſame. I meane betwyxte god and the, ſo that there ryſe no offence and ſclaunder therof, and boldly dyſpence foꝛ all maner vowes. Foꝛ els to chaunge vowes com-

The vowes are not to be chaũged.

prehended within goddes worde is nothyng els, but to abrogate & adnull this precept of god / voue te et reddite / that is to ſay / vowe you and paye your vowes. yf the cõmaundement of god maye be abrogated in one artycle: by the ſame ryghte it maye be abrogated in alle poyntes. For it is a playne and a generall commaundement of all vowes compryſed within the lymyttes of holy ſcrypture. For yf this wyndowe be opened to the Pope, that he hathe power to chaunge ſuche vowes, whether they be ſmalle or great / then myghte he forthwith do the ſame lykewyſe in al vowes. And then it ſhulde folowe by and by after, that he maye alſo dyſpence in the fyrſte cõmaundement, that is to wyt, that god oughte not to be loued with al our herte, & that our neyghboure ought not to be loued as our owne ſelues / And it ſhulde folowe forthwith, that he myght gyue lycẽce to worſhyp an Idole wͭ exteryour worſhyp/ or to cõmytte adulterie with pore mẽnes wyues, although it were neuer ſo vnlauful to cõmytte the ſame with greate Lordes wyues because it is in a greate mater. Bryefly in a thouſande other lyke, I wyll not ſay inconuenyent ⁊ vnreſonable thyngꝭ, but wondres, but mõſters of errours ſhulde folowe, as ſoone as it ſhall be ones laufull to chaũge but euen one tytle of any one cõmaundemẽt of god / So thou ſeeſt nowe and perceyueſt, that this couetous Balaam, and theſe hypochrytes and vſures, doo gyue theyr myndes to none other thynge, thenne vnto this onelye that they may foꝛ lucre ⁊ aduayle make the cōmaundement of god of ſmall ſtrength and effecte. wherfoꝛe flee, flee this Balaam/ foꝛ he can in no wyſe chaunge not euen the leaſte vowe that is coꝛroborate by the woꝛde of god. But yf it be ſo yͭ one vowe may be chaũged, I ſaye vnto the, it is free foꝛ the withoute any coſte oꝛ charge though thou doſte paye nothyng to the Romanyſtes, to chaũge all maner other vowes. Here we myghte haue large mater to dyſpute of concernynge vowes: but it apperteyneth not to this place/ Foꝛ in other places it is largelye ynoughe ſpoken of, ⁊ peraduenture (yf nede requyꝛe) we ſhall hereafter entrete moꝛe largely of yͤ ſame. Let theſe thynges ſuffyce now at this peruerte tyme. Fyꝛſt there are certeyne vowes oꝛ pꝛo-

Of vowꝭ made to men.

Vowes made to god.

myſes made vnto mẽ. And theſe vowes do bynde ſo lõge, as he to whom they haue be made, dothe exacte ⁊ requyre yͤ ſame to be performed / ⁊ of this maner vowes, we do not ſpeake here. Secundarylye there are certeyne vowes made to god, or to his ſayntes. And thoſe alſo are made in two maners or wyſe. Fyrſte they are made agaynſte god and his preceptes, and thoſe are vtterly not to be obſerued. But thoſe which are not agaynſte god, are to be obſerued and kepte. Here nowe ryſeth a verye harde doubte, whiche are thoſe vowes that are made agaynſte god and his preceptes. Here it is profytable and expedyent to conſyder and weyghe dylygentlye and ſadlye the tenne cõmaundementes/⁊ we wyll begynne at the leaſte of theym all.

A ſynful and a curſed vowe.

yf thou woldeſt vowe to luſte after the goodes or the wyfe of thy neyghbour, yf thou woldeſt vowe to beare falſe wytnes, ſteale, cõmyt adulterye, kyll or ſle/ bryefly yf thou woldeſte vowe not to loue thy neyghboure, nor owe to hym good wyll: thou perceyueſt well and ſeeſt that ſuche maner vowe is wycked and vnlaufull/ and ſuche one, as thou canneſt not kepe without the indygnacyon & dyſpleaſure of almyghty god. This thynge (I ſuppoſe) is more euydent, then that any man maye denye it more ouer yf thou woldeſte vowe not to obeye thy father and mother: doubtles it is euydent, that all theſe thynges are playne repugnaunt and contrarye to the cõmaũdementes of god. Why are we then ſo blynde ſo obſtynate, & ſo brutyſche, and vnreſonable, that we do obſerue theſe vowes, whiche are ſo openly and euydently agaynſt the preceptes of god? Is it not agaynſt the precept of god, when the doughter is maryed to a man of yonge or myddle age agaynſt yͤ wyll of her parentes, or elles without any knowlege at all gyuen vnto theym? Is it not contarye to the preceptes of god / when the ſone or the doughter, agaynſt theyr parentes wyll do vowe to entre in to Relygyon, or elles dothe receyue thoſe vnholy ordres, whiche the cōmen ſorte of preeſtes doo receyne callynge theym holye ordres / Hathe not god hym ſelfe in the .xxx. chapytre of Numeri abrogated and adnulled ſuche maner vowes or promyſes? and moreouer hathe he not ĩ this

Numeri.
30.deuotꝭ

wyſe interpreted & declared this precept: Agayne is it not againſt the cõmaundement of god, when eyther yͤ huſbãde or els the wyfe doth vowe to go in pylgrymage to ſaynt James: to do this thynge or that thyng, namely when yͤ wyfe may not be without her huſbande, nor yͤ huſbande wante the preſence of his wyfe: Come of nowe and tell me, is this vowe agaynſt the precept of god, which hath enioyned to the huſbande yͭ he ſhulde prouyde and ſette dylygently for his wyfe and his chyldren, & not to go from them, and leaue theym deſtytute of his helpe and ſuccoure / And yet for all this that Idole of Rome, & that kynge of vſures, maketh this vowe of Pylgrymage to ſaynte James inuiolable, & ſuch one as no man may in any wyſe breake

The vowe of matrymony.

in ſo moche ỹ he dothe alſo in his bulle except it by name as a thynge indyſpenſable. Notwithſtandynge ỹ yf he wolde ſhewe hym ſelfe a very byſſhop, he oughte (& not without good cauſe) both to ſpeake agaynſte, yea and alſo to abolyſſhe and vtterly deſtroy all ſuche maner of vowes. But the Pope dothe in all poyntes, as becometh ſuche one as he is to do. Foꝛ it is fyt and, ſemely foꝛ hym after this maner to pꝛohybyte & foꝛbydde that, whiche god dothe pꝛomyt and alſo cōmaunde/and contrarywyſe agayne, to cōmaūde that, whiche god dothe foꝛfende / and to deſtroye that, whiche god edyfyeth / & to buylde that, whiche god dothe deſtroye. Foꝛ howe coulde he elles be Pope? But O wold god theſe abhomynable & deuelyſſhe hypocꝛytes and vyſures dyd erre only to theyre owne hurte/ dyd leade theym ſelues only out of the ryght way, were euyll and wycked to theyr owne harmes alone: for thē they myghte ſomwhat be ſuffered / or elles yf nedelye it pleaſed theym in this wyſe to be madde, they were to be honoured worldly, as men whiche had deſerued well of vs/to be tolerated, as hethen prices / But nowe for as moche as they do with ſo incredyble furye and woodnes ſeduce ſo manye conſcyences, do murdre and ſlee ſo manye ſoules, and with theyr owne tradycyons do openlye not onely obſcure and make darke and deface the worde of god, but alſo do ſcrape it out, & put it out of mynde, and vtterlye deſtroye it: no mā vndoubtedly that wyſe is & aduyſed wyll deſyre modera

cyon

tyon to be vſed here, no man wyl requyre ſylence to be vſed in this mater, in whiche no man may kepe ſilence without abhomynable greate ſynne / and without open and euydent vnkyndnes & blaſphemye agaynſt god. Pycke the henſe with thy moderacyon and ſylence, who ſoeuer thou be, that for feare of men, thynkeſt it but a ſmall thynge openlye to cōmyt ſo open blaſphemyes agaynſte god. Let no man here ſpeake to me of moderacyon, of ſomewhat mylder wrytynge, and of ſuche other vayne tryfles. Let no man bable to me of reuerence to begyuen to theym. Lette no man prate to me of patyence and of chryſten ſufferaũce here ĩ this matyer It is an accurſed ſylence whiche leueth theſe thyngꝭ vntouched. It is a curſed reuerence, whiche here forbeareth and gyueth place, and doth as it were open a certeyne great dore, and gyue occaſyon to ſo blodye tyrauntes, and to ſo cruell wolues, blodye & frely to murther and to make hauoke of mēnes ſoules and conſcyences. But nowe for as moche as we haue ſpoken ynough of theſe lette vs touche ſomwhat concernynge the vowes of Relygyous perſones. Albeit that in an other place it be treated of in a hole boke peculyerlye appoynted to the ſame. And here fyrſte oure byſſhops and goodly vyſures ſhall haue both theyr eares ryngynge and glowyng/and here they ſhal fyrſte gnaſſhe with theyr teathe. Here they ſhall make greuous and tragycall exclamacyons I ſaye you goodlye paſtoures, (for I wyll demaunde a queſtyon here of

The vowes of relygyous perſones.

re of you (come of nowe and tell me, yf preeſtes, monkes, freres, and nũnes, dyd vowe to kepe the rules and ordynaunces of theyr ordres in vnbelefe, or in ſuperſtycyon or in the Iudycall belefe. I praye you make anſwere, ſhulde they be any better then adulterers, or thoſe whiche had made a vowe to corrupt and defyle theyr neyghbours wyfe? Tell me I beſech you, ſhuld not this be a playne renyenge of Chryſtes faythe, and to offende more greuouſlye then yf a man dyd cõmytte tenne adulteryes? But howe many are there nowe in all this hole ſecte of preeſtes, of monkes, of freers, of nũnes, whiche haue not by the reaſon hereof forſaken the fayth of Chryſte, and hath enwrapped and entangled hym ſelf and his conſcience in Iudycall ſuperſty-

The verye chꝛyſtē fayth.

cion. And paduenture theſe thynges ſeme ſtraūge thyngꝭ vnto yͧ. But I beſeche yͧ harken what is the very cryſten fayth. The very chꝛyſten fayth is this, thou doſte beleue yͭ thou arte iuſtyfyed ⁊ ſaued not by any woꝛkes, but onely thꝛough fayth in Chꝛyſte, as medyatoꝛ, ⁊ by the mercy whiche is frely gyuen in hym (as it is wꝛyten in the fyꝛſte chapptre to the Galathyanes) ſo yͭ a man do deſpayꝛe of all his owne ſtrengthe ⁊ power ⁊ of all his owne enfoꝛcementes, ⁊ all his owne woꝛkes/⁊ do all togyther ⁊ holy truſte ⁊ hange vpon the merytes ⁊ the Iuſtyce of an other man, that is to wyt of Chꝛyſt. It is not a Iudaycall fayth, to be wyllyng to be iuſtyfyed, to yͭ is to haue remyſſyon of ſynne ⁊ to be ſaued by woꝛkꝭ/by theyꝛ owne pꝛopper ſtrength and

merytes

merites? Roma.x. Is not the faythe of Chryſt by this reiecte and refuſed, as of whome thoſe holye men haue no nede, or at the leaſte wyſe haue no great neade? Nowe therfore lette euery man euen of the cōmen people be Iudge whether a greate parte of preſtes, of monkes, freers, and nunnes, do not begynne yͤ ordynaunces of theyr ſecte in that faythe. For theſe goodlye boſtynge wordes they do vſe cōmenly & opēlye for this entent (ſay they) I do embrace & profeſſe this maner of lyuynge: yͭ I maye purchaſe ſome meryte vnto my ſelfe aboue yͤ cōmen maner of lyuynge of chryſten men / for why ſhuld I els be a mōke, or a freer / & they do aſcrybe yͤ thynge to workes & ceremonyes which ought to be aſcribed onely to Chriſte, and fayth onely

I praye you tell me, what other thyng is this, then to deny Chryſte, & to ſeke holynes and ryghtwyſenes in vnbelefe and hypochryſie: that is to ſay, to be made of chryſten men very Iewes and paynymes/ſaynt Petre ſayth.

> THoſe, whiche were verelye eſcaped, they allure and begyle, and do kepe theym ſtylle in erroure.

Iewes paynymes.

AND that them ſelues are Iewes and paynymes, they do theyr owne ſelues confeſſe / For what entent (ſaye they) ſhulde I be a monke, a frere, or a nūne? Why ſhulde I trouble and vexe my ſelfe with ſo many holy obſeruaunces and ceremonyes: except I could by theſe meanes purchace and gette a prerogatyue, and ſhorte ſpede vnto ſaluacyon aboue yͤ cōmen ſorte of chryſten men, or aboue worldlye perſones. For this is theyr communycacyon. Thou hereſt that theſe are more then pharyſaycall wordes of hypocrytes, and of men puttynge confydence & truſt in theyr owne workes: in whome Chryſte hath no maner place or worke at all. Is it any doubte, that all theſe men do loke for that thynge of the workes, and I wot not what obſeruaunces of theyr ordres: whiche they ought to haue loked for of Chryſte, and of the mercye of god promyſed in Chryſt, wherfore it is as certayne as any thynge maye be, that all Collegyate churches and all monaſteryes, in which there are preeſtes, monkes or freers lyuynge in ſuch maner hypochryſy & perylous truſte and belefe: are farre more fylthye and abhomynable, than any ſtues, then any bordell howſes/ or any dennes of theues. And therfore it is alſo brought to paſſe by ỹ wrathe and indygnacyon of god that as it were for a ſygne & marke, theſe preeſtes are moſte polluted and defyled with all kyndes welnere and ſortes of fleſſhely luſtes & pleſures. For whē through ſuche maner hypochryſie of workes they do vyolate the chaſtytie and purytie of the chryſten fayth then for a punyſſhement, they ar gyuen in to that vnclennes, that they do alſo vyolate the chaſtyte of theyr bodyes / as ſaynt Peter doth ſaye, that they do allure vnto the deſyres and luſtes of the fleſſhe / Soo all ordres, and all vowes, becauſe they are moſte parte of theym agaynſt the fyrſte

Hypochryſye of workes.

the ſeconde, and the thyrde, commaundemente of god / are to be eſchewed, and fledde frome, as from a peſtylence. And I wolde hertelye aduertyſe and counſayle all relygyous perſones and all ſuche maner Juſtycyaryes, that they ſhulde here choſe eyther the one or the other of theſe two: that is to wytte, eyther to leaue and forſake this Judaycal fayth and truſte in workes / and to leane to the knowelage and the vſe and profyte of Chryſte / and to begyn theyr lyfe agayne in fayth: or elles rather lette them, yf they may not frelye, optayne lycence to forſake, bothe theyr relygyous habyte, and alſo theyr Monaſteryes / and lette theym retourne vnto ẏ ſymplycyte, which is in our Sauyoure Chryſte Jheſu, and let theym choſe rather any other

Relygyous perſones.

honeſt

honeſte and godlye kynde of lyuynge. And thou oughteſt to do none otherwyſe here in this thynge, then yf thou dyddeſt openlye kepe an harlot in thy companye. For there, yf thou wylte lyue vertuouſlye and godlye: eyther thou muſte forſake thyne harlot or els marie her to thy wyfe. Lo here is that ſpyrytuall Baal, of whome by the gyfte of god there is wrytten a lytell boke, wherin by ſcryptures and argumentes it is ſtronge ynoughe proued, that the profeſſyon of Monaſtycall vowes is of it ſelfe, wycked and heretycall, and that it is a verye harde thynge to brynge aboute, that a mã may vſe it well. And I doubte not but that by theſe thynges good myndes and conſcyences, and alſo reaſon ben there by well ſatyſfyed ſo that from henſeforth

I hope that there ſhall not be ſo many, whiche ſhall be begyled and peryſſhe thoroughe the Relygyous lyfe and that wretched clarkſhype. And yf ſome certayn men ben therwith myſcontent, as thoughe in the ſayde boke were preached lybertye to preeſtes, monkes, freers: and nũnes, and that monaſteryes and temples, ſhulde be pulled downe and deſtroyed. I do not greatlye marueyle hereof. For who can ſatyſfy thoſe wycked men, which wyll heare nothynge, but that whiche ſemethe good to theym ſelues/ and whiche (as ſalomon ſaythe) ben ſetteled in theyr owne folyſſhe hertes. Agayne on the other ſyde yf they ſhulde be demaunded a reaſon and cauſe of theyr tradycions, they can do nothyng els but ſhewe theyr purple cardynall hattes, ⁊ theyr byſſhops myters, ⁊ wᵗ a lordly countenaunce breake out ⁊ ſay, doſt thou not ſe that I am a cardynall, doſt thou not know, that I am a byſſhop? What doſte yᵘ requyre the knowlege of ſcrypture, or a cauſe of his belefe in a byſſhop? What neade hath a byſſhop of any ſuche ſmal tryfles, the cure ⁊ charge wherof may be put vnto his chapleynes? And what meruayle is it, yᵗ thoſe preſumptuous men ⁊ truſtynge to theyr ſelues, do vſe ſo earneſt, ſo wayghtie, ⁊ ſo prowde wordes ſith it is ſo yᵗ they onely haue yᵉ holy ghoſt, ĩ ſo moche yᵗ wher ſoeuer they be aſſembled ⁊ gathered togyther, there is vndoubtedly the holy ghoſte? Syth it is ſo (I ſay) that they haue not onely the holy ghoſt, but euen yᵉ moſt holy ſpryte/ yᵗ is to wyt yᵉ ſpryte of yᵉ Pope, whiche is not only (as Chꝛyſt is called of Peter in yͤ actes)ryghtuous ⁊ holy:but alſo is moſte holy. But veryly I am vtterly wery to ſpeke any moꝛe hereof thoſe curſed abuſes ⁊ bulles of the Pope/⁊ I wyll dyfferre ⁊ put of, vntyll they happelye do begynne to graūt agaynſt theſe thyngꝭ, whiche I haue ſayd . At this tyme it is ſuffycient to know, that all mē are bounden befoꝛe god with his woꝛde, yea ⁊ otherwyſe yf they ben in iuſte auctoꝛyte to deſtroy, ⁊ vtterly to extyncte theſe bulles of yͤ popes indulgencꝭ ⁊ ꝑdons. Beſides this not onely to cōdempne ⁊ deſpyſe thoſe hypochꝛytes ⁊ vyſures, which do publyſſhe ⁊ pꝛeche thē as vnlerned ⁊ wycked beſtes: but alſo to ſhunte thē ⁊ to flee from them, as from wolues, and cruell Lyons, accoꝛdynge to the doctryne of the apoſtles, both Peter & alſo Paule. And that I maye ones ende theſe complayntes procedyng of moſte rightfull ſorowe and grefe. I beſeche you tell me, is not this alſo an excellent dede, and ſuche as hath not ben harde of before in any nacyō or in any age or tyme, that our byſſhops by the grace of god berynge ſmall fauoure towardes goddes worde and lykewyſe agayne ſtandynge but ſmally in fauoure, with it do not ſecretlye but openlye forbyd preeſtes honeſt matrymonyes. And (that a man may knowe the apoſtles of Sathan dryued at ones of all furyes) do they not with thretenynge of empryſonementes and of the ſwerde, ſtoutely go aboute this, that that holye and goodly chaſtytie (whiche is no thynge

at all

at al myniſſhed nor appayred by ſo many thouſandes of harlottꝭ by ſo many monſturous kyndes of lecherye) ſhulde not by wedlocke, that is to witte (as they cal it) a laye and a prophane thyng, peraduenture ſuffre ſome damage and hynderaunce. And lorde howe my mynde coueteth and deſyreth here to make reherſall, by name of theſe cyties belongynge to preeſtes, in which euery where almoſt thorough out all chryſtendome we do ſe ſo manye and ſo greate flockes of vnhoneſte womē and that for none other cauſe but bicauſe they are kepte not of the cōmen people, but of preſtes) to be mayntayned none otherwyſe, then yf it were a companye of honeſt matrones, to ẏ open ſclaūder of the churche / & to be fedde in ydlenes with delycate meates and drynkes/to haue the honorable name and tytles of families/ and moreouer after yͤ ſimilitude & maner of temples (as the pſalmiſte ſaythe) to be cladde in purple, and decked, and garnyſſhed with golde, peerle, and precyous ſtones. I ſay I haue moche a do to holde my tonge from namyng of them: but yet I wyll refrayne vntyll ſome defender of ſuch maner chaſtyte do ryſe, whiche wyll go aboute to defende and mayntayne this holye contynencye of preſtes, But oh peuyſhe fole, and vnmanerlye carter that I am, which dare be ſo bold to call ſuch byſſhoppes baudes, and their worſhypfull cathedrall churches ſtues. But go forthe on you papiſtes byſſhoppes procede luckely to that wherunto your vertue leadeth you/& for aſmoch as you thynke it a ſmal thynge, and not

Pſalmo. C.xliii.

ynoughe

ynough that all men do dyſprayſe you, and ſpeake euyll of you/ that are hated of the people/ and that in a maner your name is deſpyſed of euery good man: encreaſe you & heape you hatred vpon hatred / for (as he ſayethe) they whiche ones ouerleaped and paſſed the bondes of ſhamefaſtnes, muſt nedes be excedynge bolde & ſhameles for if you had not ſhortlye as it were, waſſhed awaye this your ſo great fauour of the people, wt ſome newe hatred/ yf you were not now ymages & dūbe blockꝫ: it lacked not moch, but yͤ for excedige great loue, & for ſo many excellēt benefytꝫ of yours, we wold haue ſet vp your ymagꝫ made of gold, in yͤ market place/ and why ſhuld we not put you to worſhyp, ſettynge vp ymages & ſuch other monumētꝫ for a memorial to be had of you: ſith it is ſo yͤ

Cicero in his epiſtles

you) yf I be not begyled (haue verye wel deſeruyd it with your merytes / and euen nowe alſo openly defendyng the kepyng of hoores bothe with your wordes and your dedes, do heape meritꝫ vpō merytes / fyrſte you are youre ſelues more vnchaſt then I wyll reherſe, & do wynke at ſo manye whoredomes, and at ſo many ſtues & bordel houſes buylded roūd aboute your churches (for what other thynge are cōmenly all the preſtes houſes?) and ſome of you whiche I coulde name doo your ſelues alſo kepe harlottes. Secundarylye you do fede and noryſſhe your ſelues moſt delicately and tenderlye in ryote and pleaſures with the bloode and ſwete of poore men / Beſydes, empoueryſhynge and beggerynge the worlde with your guyles and deceyptes, you do with your excõmunycacions and interdiccyons vexe and toſſe all thynges vp & downe, afflictynge and tormentyng poore men, both in ſoule, in bodye, and in theyr goodes / you do extyncte and deſtroye the goſpelles / & not õely you your ſelues doo no maner worke belongyng to the offyce of a biſſhop, but alſo you wyll not ſuffre any other mẽ to preache the worde of god / you do purſue the preachers, from cytie to cytie, (as it was prophecyed in the. xxiii. chapytre of Mathue) and you do expulſe thẽ as knaues and vyle wretches out of al your dominions / and yet in the meane ſeaſon your ſelues are nothynge elles in cõparyſon but viſures, whome as vnprofitable burdeynes of darthe the worlde can no lẽger beare nor ſuffre, one les you do waxe wyſe ⁊ amende. Wherfoꝛe here labour ⁊ applye your ſelues luſtelye ⁊ ſtoutelye yͭ you do not pleaſe yͤ people ouer moche/encreace your benefites ⁊ good dedes/gyue diligens luſtely that there maye not nede any great buſynes to deſtroy your tyranny, whyles you do ſhake out your owne ſelues, and do youre owne ſelues wylfully rōne foꝛth to your owne confuſyon and deſtruccyon/I verely (to gyue you good ⁊ faythfull coūſayle) wolde not aduertyſe you yͭ you ſhulde purchace ⁊ get vnto your ſelues the fauour ⁊ loue of the people, wͭ myldenes, wͭ mercifulnes, wͭ ſoftnes, with paſcience /and ſincerite apoſtolicall/yͭ is to wyt, wͭ thoſe vertues, wͭ thoſe holy meanes, which ſaynt Paule dyd vſe/ go foꝛth ⁊ holde on as you haue begonne / this is euen yͤ ryght & next way to vndoubted deſtruccion, wherunto you do ſo greatlye make haſt/ for euen ſo dyd your fathers yͤ Iewes, into whoſe hypochriſie you are ſucceded, which whẽ they had ſlayne yͤ lorde & authoure of lyfe Ieſu Cryſt, & had by decrees ꝓmulged and publyſſhed yͤ goſpelles to be forbedẽ yet could they not ſo reſt vntyll they had ꝓuoked yͤ romaynes and ſo had ſought theyr owne vndoubted miſchefe/ which ſayd romaynes at yͤ laſt ſettyng violẽtly vpõ them, ſlewe them vp, & vtterly deſtroied thẽ/ for how could you better obſerue & fulfyl yͤ which becometh your ꝑſonages to do: then yf you do go about & endeuer to proue & ſhewe your ſelues yͤ very ryght & trewe ſones & heyres of ſuche maner parẽtes/ but here (I wene) they wyl do vpon thẽ all yͤ

The hole armoure or harnayſe of ỹ popes byſſhoppys.

hole epiſcopall armoure, that is to wyt a purple Palle, and a forked mytre, vpon theyr hed, theyr gloues and theyr rynges with p̄cious ſtones, to fence bothe theyr handes with all / they ſhall alſo haue theyr fete ſhode not in ỹ preparacyō of ỹ goſpel of peace, but of ỹ ſādalle of vanite / ⁊ a ſyluer croſſe hangyng downe to ỹ myddes of theyr breſte / ⁊ (yf I be not deceyuyd) a Romane palle alſo couerynge theyr ſhulders / ⁊ a ſhepherdes ſtaffe to meaſure theyr paſe / and ſo then hauyng this armure vpon them, with a ſtatelye and a ſolempne gate they ſhall come forth, ⁊ ſaye / wylte thou ỹ we ſhuld ſhewe the more playnly a cauſe, why we do kepe preeſtes from wedlocke: hathe not ỹ moſt holy father ỹ pope forbeden this by his lawes and holye canons:

addynge alſo a penalytie vpon yͤ ſame. Foꝛ theſe ſhall be all the argumentes, reaſons, and ſyllogiſmes, by which thoſe excellent mē and woꝛſhypfull paſtours maye ſhewe the cauſe of theyꝛ dede (wͭ the lycence ⁊ fauoure of the moſt holy pope, and of his woꝛſhipful bulles be this ſpoken) I verelye do nothyng doubte, that the lawes exactynge this ſyngle lyfe, are deuelyſſhe doctryne, and moſte groſſe phantaſmes of the deuyl/ And here I cā not refrayne, but I muſte nedes clerely and pleynly ſhewe, what I do thynke of yͤ contynencie of pꝛeeſtes. Thou ſhalt graunte me this one thyng good cryſten reader, that I may here with bolde ⁊ ſcoffynge woꝛdes, mocke and cheke theſe theyꝛ ſo earneſt coūſayles and pꝛoude woꝛdes of the decretalles. Tell

Wryters of commedyes.

me I pray you, why do the poets, that make commedyes, alwayes ymagyne the men baudes and yͤ women baudes to be ſuche maner ones, yͭ they do retayne yong men with pleaſures, and by certayne polycie and certayne craftes do counſayll them from mariage? Doubtles it is not for any good wyll, that they do beare to the yonge men: but becauſe by yͤ maryages of yonge men they do leſe a great parte of theyr gaynes. Euen ſo the byſſhoppe of Rome with his clientes the aucthours of the forſayd lawe of vn chaſte contynencye haue a great parte of theyr yerely rentes and profytes by the baudrye of preeſtes, and by preeſtes hoores. For who ſoeuer wyll at his lybertye kepe hoores and mennes wyues with prayſe and fauour: he is cōpelled to paye yerely to the byſſhop a crowne of gold. And this tradicyon is ſo cõmenly knowen that it is nowe a cõmen ſayeng, that chaſt perſones and good lyuers are nothynge profytable to the offyce of a preeſte (for ſo they cal the tyranny of the offycyales) in ſomoch that (as ſome ſaye) the officyales do alſo hate the preeſtes, that are chaſte lyuers/ I beſech you tell me, when at any tyme were baudes more ryche, or more honourable? When was euer baudrye more vnpunyſſhed then in the popes byſſhoppes? ⁊ what meruaile is it, yf thoſe holy fathers, whẽ they haue receyued money, doo wynke at the kepyng of hoores: ſeynge that it is an olde ſaynge, that lucre ſmelleth well of what ſoeuer maner thynge it be goten? who wyll

then

Vnprofytable to yͤ offyce of a preeſt.

a ꝓuerbe.

then be ſo vncurtayſe, and ſo vngentle, as to blame the wyſdome of the byſſhoppes, for that they do approue and allowe harlottꝭ. Who is he, but he knoweth, that there are dyuers craftes, and dyuers meanes, by which marchaũtes do get gaynes, and that there are dyuers and ſondrye kyndes of mercers: one ſelleth peper/another ſaffron/another clothe/another purple or clothe of golde/what meruayle is it then yf byſſhop Kayface of Rome (leaſte he only ſhulde ſet nought by lucre) as it were in certayne fayers or markettes ordeyned and ſet vp rounde aboute thoſe goodly and gorgious churches, do ſelle the fleſſhe and the ſkynne (I had almoſt ſpoken a fouler worde) of a quycke harlot/for whiche waye elles ſhulde that holy father and his haue a ſuffycyent lyuynge, yf they dyd not playe the marchaũtes in ſuch honeſt wyſe? Further more yf it fortune ſo that at any tyme, that ſome preſt do gyue vnto any ſuche maner harlotte any whytte more of his chaſtite then nede is, ſo that her belye dothe ſwelle, and ſhe doth brynge forth to hym the ſeale of his contynency, ſome pretye chylde: then forth with encreaceth that yerely rente of the byſſhop / for then aboue yͤ yerely crowen, the byſſhop getteth agayne occaſyon to exercyſe mercy/ & to this wretched father and to the chyld newly borne, thẽ fyrſte he ſelleth this harlot agayne: and he doeth not ſuffre ſomoche as the ſelye poore infaunt to haue his owne mother, whiche god hathe gyuen to hym, frelye, & without payeng of money/ſo thus this profet & gaynes, which wolde ſcacely come ſyngle to the cōmen baudes: to the byſſhopps is properlye & craftely doubled/ is not this then a goodly & a gay market to ſell thus the harlottes belyes twyſe euery yere, yf fortune be theyr frende? is not this a goodly marchaūdyſe ſemely for biſſhoppes and ſo holy officiales to get lucre by the whoredome of other men: & ſo with thoſe ſecrete and pryue baudryes to paſſe any ſtues? And it is no meruayle yf for the augmentacyon and conſeruacyō of the goodes of yͤ churche (for the goodes of the church they do call gold and ſyluer, contrary to the wordes of ſaynt Peter) theſe holy fathers do buſylye gyue theyr minde to this lucre yf they wyll not graunt vnto yͤ preeſtes honeſt wedlocke, which helpeth

the goodes of the churche.

peth nothyng to the gettyng of lucre & gaynes/for lauful wyues are nothyng profitable to the offyce and to the cofers (as I ſayd before)of the moſte reuerende fathers and lordes. I beſeche the good reader take in good worth theſe my bourdes & geſtes, though they be ſomwhat large and playne: which do procede vndubtedly not of any luſte or pleaſure that I haue therin, but of verye great grefe and ſorowe of my herte. For who wolde not mourne greatly? Who wolde not hertelye ſorowe? that ſeethe theſe ſo abhomynable dyſpyſers of the worde of god whiche are ſo deſtytute of all wyſdome, reaſon, and wytte /that ſooner wyll any brute beaſtes, Oxen, or Aſſes haue wytte, then thes excellent herdyſmen of the churche.

And this is it which ŷ lorde threteneth by Esaie sayenge.

" I Shall gyue them chyldren
" to be theyr prynces, and effe-
" minate persones ſhall haue do-
" minion ouer them.

For they can here laye none other excuse for thē selues/ that all these thynges are done, & do, procede of a deuelysche couetousnes and an horryble blyndnes: it is more open and euydent then ŷ it may be hyd /for though they dyd passe verye asses in ignoraunce, and very stockes and blockes in dulnes and in insensibilite: yet coulde they not denye, that god dyd neuer in any place forbid preestes to wedde wyues/ So farre of it is, that he dyd forbyd it: that Paule hath also charged the ſtede of god, yea or elles aboue god. But here agayne they wyll barke out theyr olde ſonge agaynſte me. The pope hathe prohibited it. The pope hath forbydden it. What is this that you ſaye? O good ſyrs and ſwete men, as who ſhulde ſaye, that yf the pope do commaũde me, that I ſhulde not be obedyent to my parentes, lykewyſe as he hathe done in the profeſſyon of relygyon, that I ſhulde not kepe the commaundementes of god: it dyd not belong to yͤ offyce which you do falſely profeſſe, with all your power and myght to withſtande and reſyſte hym / and his commaundementes / haue you not redde the wordes of ſaynte Peter in the. v. of the actes of the Apoſtles.

“ WE ought to obey god, rather
“ then men.

whē mēs tradicyōs ought to ceaſe all thoughe they be ꝓfitable

DO you not knowe, that all tradicyōs of mē, all though they be good and profytable, yet in the tyme of neceſſyte, and whē they are intollerable, they do ceaſe ⁊ do bynde nothynge at all. Do you not knowe by open experyence, that this moſte vngracyous and verye deuelyſhe tradicyon of ſyngle lyfe and chaſtyte, is impoſſyble to be kept of preeſtes and that throughe it the whole worlde is fylled with fornycacyons and adulteryes? And yet for all this you moſte vncharitable perſones, that euer were ſyns the world fyrſt beganne, do for moſt fylthy lucre and auayle conſtrayne and dryue ſelye wretched conſciences to ſynne, and to aſſured deſtruccyon/you ſe and perceyue playnely, yea & in a maner you feele it, that this chaſtyte of ſyngle lyfe can not be obſerued and kepte: and yet you do compell & dryue mē to kepe it, without any neceſſytie. O you moſt cruell tormentours of conſciences, howe do you embrue, how do you pollute and defyle your handes in ỹ bloode of innocent perſones? O howe ſore an accompte ſhall you gyue of your tyrannye. Beſydes this it is euydent ynoughe, that all thoſe humayne tradicyons of ſyngle lyfe and forbyddyng matrymonye are the doctrynes (as the apoſtle calleth them) of ỹ deuylles/as it is proued and declared by thoſe places a lytle before alledged of his epyſtles to Tite & Timothe/as in ỹ thyrde chaptre of ỹ fyrſt epyſtle to Timothe.

A Byſſhop ought to be the huſbande of one wyfe.

⁂ ⁂ ⁂ ⁂

THis is the inſtytucyon and ordynaunce of god. This is the conſtitucyon promulged and publyſſhed by the apoſtle Paule. Wherfore it can not be otherwyſe, but that all that doctryne is of the deuyll, what ſoeuer is taught, or elles commaundyd by any lawes contrarye to it. For god is not contrary to hym ſelfe neyther dothe he proue hym ſelfe a lyer / lykewyſe as the ſcrypture hathe all this in euery place, and dothe alſo compelle euery man, be he neuer ſo blynde, to confeſſe it: ſo alſo euery man is compelled to confeſſe, that the lawe of the pope concernynge the ſyngle lyfe of pꝛeeſtes is openlye agaynſte the oꝛdynacyon of Paule, and of god. Are not theſe thynges clere ynoughe are not they euydent ynoughe to you, you blynde and gydes of the blynde? I ſaye go to ſearche all your wyttes, and do the beſte that you can,. What can you allege oꝛ bꝛyng here foꝛ your ſelfe? What dare you euen pꝛofer to ſpeake here agaynſte? Are not your harde foꝛehedes of iyerne, and your bꝛaſen neckes nowe at the laſte aſhamed, when it dothe come to your mynde and rememberaunce, that you doo with ſo great tyꝛanny compelle ſo many conſcyences, to obſerue the commaundement and doctryne of yͤ deuyll, agaynſt the oꝛdynaũce ⁊ cõmaũdemẽt of god? The thyꝛde place of the apoſtle is, in the .iiii. chapytre of the fyrſte epyſtle to Timothe.

“ The ſpirite ſpeaketh of a ſuertye that in the laſte dayes
“ certeyne men ſhal ſhrynke away
“ from the fayth, gyuynge hede to
“ the doctrynes of deuylles.

LO there the apoſtle calleth thoſe doctrynes of deuylles, whiche do forbyd matrimony / & the apoſtle dothe not there ſpeke of the Tacianes, ſo as that moſt wretched & folyſſhe wryter went aboute to ymagyne, in that bare & vnfrutefull trifelynge treatyſe entyteled / de loco petri / that is to ſay of the place of Peter. For the Tacianes dyd prohibite matrymony as a thyng euyl of it owne nature, & as ſynne. But Paule

The hereſye of the Tacyães

ſpeaketh of them, which do only
prohybyte matrymonye, and do
not alſo condempne ⁊ dyſalowe
it as ſynne/ lykewyſe as the papiſtes do alſo prohybite certayne
meates, and yet they do not accompte it for ſynne to eate theſe
meates or thoſe meates. So alſo
the pope dothe not ſaye, as yͤ Tacianes dyd, yͭ wedlocke is ſynne/
neyther doth he ſaye that to eate
egges or to eate fleſche is ſynne/
but he doth onlye prohybyte thē,
to make a deceyptfull coloure ⁊
hypocryſye of great holynes, as
ſaynt Paule ſaythe.

IN hypocryſye they do ſpeke ,,
leſynges, and of yͤ doctrines ,,
of deuylles, ,,

FOr as moche then as theſe
thre places of Paule, as be
yngs

ynge the worde of the ſouerayne maieſtye and of god, do abyde & ſtonde as ſtyfly as it were a braſſen walle or a great rocke, and do alſo effectually and myghtelye proue, that the tradycyon of this ſyngle lyfe agaynſte the ordenaunce of god, is doctryne of deuylles, as it is playnely expreſſed in the wordes of Paule: then it reſteth and remayneth, that the preeſtes, which can not contayne & lyue chaſt, with a bolde mynde and a very fre conſcience do here betake them ſelues to theſe wordes of god/ yea & euen thoſe alſo whiche haue no nede of a wyfe, yet ought nowe to marye a wyfe only to ſhame and ſcorne the deuyl and this his ſo renomed and poyſoned doctrine. And you alſo excellent prelates, yf you had leuer be the apoſtles of cryſte, then of Sathan: ought ſtoutely and manfully to labour and do your endeuour, to plucke vp thoſe ſtues aboute your churches, & that yͭ preeſtes myght mary / but here you wyll obiecte and allege for your ſelues, that preeſtes, when they were conſecrated, dyd ſwere to lyue ſole without wyues. Fayre wordes I beſeche you/haue I not ſayde here before? and is it not proued with many argumentes, in other places that all the vowes, whiche are made contrarye to the precepte and ordynaunce of god, are of none effecte/and that they are to be forſaken and broken vndre the payne of eternall indygnacyon and dredefull wrathe of god. Now that ſuche vowes of abſtaynynge from matrymonye hathe bene made

the vowe of lyuige ſyngle.

The preſtes do vowe to the pope and not to god

and of all men is made contrary to the precept and indyngnacion of god: it is certeyne & vndoubted. Beſydes this, the preeſtes do not vowe theyr vowe to god, but to the pope/but to the tradycyōs of man/and therfore men ought to dyſſolue it/ For ſuche maner vowe dothe neuer come, nor aperteyneth any thynge at all to god. Wherfore there is no ieoꝑdy at al of conſcience in yͤ matyer yf preeſtes do wedde laufull wyues: but thoſe hypochrytes maſkers and mummers do of them ſelues fayne & ymagyne I wote not what perelles and ieoperdyes of helthe and ſaluacyon euen as ſpyders do of thē ſelues make theyr webbes / agayne on the other ſyde, whoredome, in whiche are mere daungers of ſoules, & vnchaſt places ſūptuouſly buelded aboute theyr churches, theſe thynges they do ſell for money/ & do permytte all men to vſe them at theyr lybertye vnpunyſſhed, ſo that they do gyue, & paye ſomwhat. Are not theſe then holy paſtours, & excellent byſſhoppes? ¶ They crucyfye chryſte, & let Barrabas the erraunt thefe go at lybertye. Wo, wo, wo, be to them, onles they amende. What can I do more? I monyſſhe them, and crye vnto them, and to all that do holde with them, that they ſhuld repent and amēde, and that they ſhulde take hede to them ſelues for the iugement of god doth not ſlacke/ god wyll not alwayes ſuffre the contempte of his worde.

NOwe fynally I wyll gentelye and hertelye here exhorte al thoſe, who ſoeuer they be that wyll rebuke thoſe mummynge and dyſguyſed byſſhoppes with wrytynges: that they do it openly, boldly, and playnely/accordynge to the doctryne of the goſpell and of the apoſtle Paule/ And that they do prouoke them, vnto the lawe of the ſcrypptures, lykewyſe as I haue done hytherto. For thoughe they be neuer ſo worſſhyppefull in the worlde, yet at the leaſte wyſe in this poynte we are ſuperyours, that this cōmen ſorte of byſſhoppes for theyr excedyng great ygnorauncye, dulnes, and ydlenes/ hathe had theſe many yeres a ſclaunderous name amonge all men / and agayne is ſore diſprayſed, and hathe an euyll reporte, becauſe they wyll not come forth to lyght/and do refuſe to be iudged accordyng to the ſcriptures/ do fle from the place of open and not ſuſpecte audyence. By the reaſon therfore of this ſelfe ſame thynge theyr hypocriſye is nowe opened ones and aboliſched, and they them ſelues (lyke vnto the crowe i Aeſopes fables) hauyng theyr goodly fethers plucked a way from them, do prouoke yͤ lokers on to laughter. ¶There can not therfore a more dyſpleaſure, nor a more paynfull thynge in the worlde chaunce vnto them: then yf we doo reſyſte them openly to theyr face / and do prouoke and call them forthe vnto the ſcryptures/and boldely callynge and cryenge on them, do requyre of them to ſhewe the fundacyon, whereupon they haue the verye grounde of theyr doctryne

There they can not choſe but be aſhamed (thoughe they do diſſemble and hyde it neuer ſomoche) in theyr hertes within, and in theyr conſcyences ſo that they ſhal vtterly holde theyr peace, and can allege nothynge for them ſelues. And yf they wolde go aboute to breake out with tyranny and violence, then ſhall theyr ſhame and rebuke be ſomoch be the greater and they ſhall ſtrayghte and the ſoner come vnto this myſchefe & euyll, whiche they do ſo greatly ſhunte and eſchewe/and by ſo moch, the ſooner theyr eſtimacyō ſhall decaye and peryſche bothe with god & men/for they coulde not by any other meane, more helpe our ſyde and the courſe of yͤ worde of the lorde: then yf they do greatlye grudge & be angery, and do moſt greatly rage and be rough out theyr dyoces boldely and purely preache the goſpell in the byſſhoppes ſtede. Whiche ſayd preachars beynge in daunger of perſecucyons (for euermore the worlde ſhall hate the worde of god) the byſſhoppes alſo ſhall aſmoche as lyethe in theyr power lawfully to doo, mayntayne and defende / and beſtowe theyr bloode and lyfe, to mayntayne and fortyfye the trouthe of the goſpell, agaynſte the tradycyons of men, lykewyſe as Chryſte hym ſelfe and alſo Paule bothe taught, and alſo gaue example of the ſame with theyr dede. So we rede that ſaynt Walery byſſhop of Hyppom. dyd ſubſtytute Auguſtyne as preacher in his ſtede (before that the ſayde Auguſtyne was made byſſhoppe) and dyd defēde hym / and it was

Valerye

Auguſtine

the comen maner and cuſtome in yͤ moſte parte of the regyons and churches of yͤ eaſte and of Grece londe, yͤ preeſtes dyd preache for the byſchoppes, in the preſence of them. Beſydes this, let ſuche maner byſchoppes in eſpecyal ſtudy by beſtowynge care and benefytes vpon poore folke, to make amendes for that, whiche is wantynge of theyr parte in the mynyſterie of the worde. What ſoeuer byſchop he be that dothe not, all other thynges ſet aparte, ſet his mynde vpon theſe thynges only as greateſt thinges and the very thynges belongyng to a byſchop let hym not byleue to be ſaued/ for aſmoche as he is a mere tyraunt, tormentour, and murtherer of ſoules/ But here they wyll obiecte and ſaye, how or in what wyſe can ſuche maner care for poore folke, and the kepynge of a house and pryncely porte (ſuche as our byſſhoppes for the moſte parte do kepe now a dayes) ſtāde bothe togyther the one with the other? I anſwere, we do not here ſpeke how thou mayſt be made a prynce: but howe thou mayſte be a good byſſhop and be ſaued / for who hathe cōmaunded that byſſhops ſhuld ſo play yͤ galādes, & vſe ſuche pompe and gorgyouſnes of yͤ courte? Chryſt dyd openly forbyd thē to be as the kynges and prynces of yͤ gētyles, where he doth by expreſſe and open wordes ſeperate and dyuyde them from prynces of the worlde, and ſaythe.

The kynges and rulers of yͤ »
gētyles are lordes ouer thē »
but you ſhall not do ſo. »

THeſe wordes, that prince, of prynces, yͤ kyng of kynges and that lorde of maieſtye, wyll not reuoke/he wyll not abolyſche them/ne ſuffre them to be thruſt out of place, & made voyde for thy peuyſche excuſes, wherwith thou doſte in thy conſcyence coldly and fayntly cōforte thy ſelfe/ why doſte thou not rather forſake thy lordely porte, be it neuer ſo pleſaunt: yf thou canſt not execute and fulfyll the offyce of a byſchop/why doſte thou for tranſytory and moſt vyle honour, forget thyne owne helth and ſaluacyon: yea moreouer wyttyngly & wyllyngly doeſt caſt away thyne owne ſoule, for the moſt deceyptfull pleaſure of this lyfe: Why doſte thou (I ſaye) wyttyngly & wylfully peryſche: Euen thoſe men are ſcantly ſaued at the laſt whiche wᵗ couragyous fayth continually wreſtlynge and fyghtynge with theyr fleſſhe and the deuyll, do lyue in a good ⁊ a vertuous kynde of lyfe. Why doſte thou then hope ĩ vayne, that thy ſelfe ſhalte be ſaued amonge ſo many ieoperdyes, amonge ſo many voluptes and pleaſures?

What dothe it profyte (ſaythe „
chriſt hym ſelfe) if he do poſ- „
ſeſſe all the worlde, ⁊ all yͤ kyng- „
domes: ⁊ do caſt away his owne „
(ſoule? „

But wherof or whiche waye (wyl ſome ſay) ſhuld kyngꝭ prynces, erles, barons, knyghtis brefely all yͤ nobles of yͤ worlde, prouyde for theyr yonger childrẽ yf theſe byſſhoprykes, yf thoſe cathedral and collegiat churches were not? And therin fyrſte we may openly ſe the excedynge folyſhnes ⁊ blyndenes of yͤ al criſtēdome which hytherto haue boughte cōmenly of the Romaniſtes the benefyces and prebendes foūded by them ſelues, wͭ the bloode of theyr chyldren. Lo here J doo ſpeke vnto the who ſoeuer thou art, whiche doeſt wyttyngly ſo caſt awaye thy chyldren / yf any ploughman or ſmythe dyd woūde or kyll thy ſone, or elles dyd defyle thy doughter or thy ſyſter: yͧ woldeſt for angre and woodnes go aboute to do the vttermoſte myſchefe that thou couldeſt / to ouerthrowe ⁊ deſtroye euen hole cyties, to deſtroy hole prouynces for the reuengyng therof, wolde ſeme but a ſmall mater vnto the thou woldeſt thynke ī thy mynde it to be ſo hyghe and ſo haynous an offence, that was done vnto the. But I beſeche the, here open the iyes of thy mynde, and loke, whether there can be any a more ſore homycyde and murtherer of thy chyldren, any more greuous and more cruel enemy vnto them then thou arte thyne owne ſelfe, auaunſynge and promotynge them vnto a biſſhopryke or thruſtyng them downe in to ſuche a church (as they do cal it) for thou makeſt thy ſone a byſſhop, which ſtate (as it is nowe farre awaye from the mynyſtracyon of the worde, and from all godlynes) yͧ knoweſt vndoubtedly to be a deuelyſſhe ſtate, in whiche thy ſone can in no wyſe be ſaued. Syth it is ſo, that thou doeſt knowe this: tel me I beſech the whether thou doeſt not more ſore rage, and vſe more crueltie agaynſt hym, then yf thou cut hym in to gobbettes,

the ſtate of a byſſhop.

and

⁊ dyddeſt throwe his fleſſhe vnto dogges to be deuowred / yf thy ſone, throughe ignoraunce or errour had ſtumbeled ⁊ fallen into ſuche a certayne kynde ⁊ maner of lyuyng: thou onghteſt with al dyligence, ⁊ with al thy power to labour ⁊ go about (yf there were any wyſdome, or any poynt of a chryſtē mynde in the) to ryd hym out of it, althoughe thou haddeſt but only one lofe of bread to lyue on thy ſelfe, wherof yͧ ſhuldeſt be fayne to gyue hym the one halfe, but here I beſeche the loke vpon thy ſelfe ſomwhat more nere and more narowly / who ſoeuer thou art whiche doſte caſte downe thy chyldrē hedlonge in to theſe kyndes ⁊ maners of lyuynge, ⁊ cōſydre what maner father yͧ art only to kepe thy dominiō ⁊ thy ryches vpryght ⁊ from decay, only leaſt thy

He meaneth whē a mā hath not yͤ gift of cōtinēcy ⁊ can not kepe his profeſſyon / or when the ꝓfeſſyon is made with any wycked opynyō of iuſtificacion to be had therby.

thy gold & ſyluer ſhuld be mynyſſhed, yf it were deuyded amonge many heyres: yͧ doſte thruſt downe & wyllyngely caſt hedlõg thy ſones & kynneſmẽ in to yͤ depe dũgeon of hell/neyther doth it moue or ſtyre yͤ any whyt, to ſe thyne owne blood ſouped & ſwalowed vp in yͤ throte of yͤ deuyl, & ꝑpetually to peryſſhe: ſo yͭ thou be not cõpelled to mynyſſhe or debate any thynge of thy ſuꝑfluite, or any percell of thy põpe & royalte. Lo this mooſt vngracious opynyon this coſtome is crepte in & vſed i many places, yͭ as oftẽ tymes as any great mãnes ſone beyng mete rather for any other thyng, thẽ for a byſſhopryke, is choſẽ & elected byſſhoppe, or is brought into the temple. Than with ſolempne pompe, and a ſolempne company ſette in theyr arraye are made cryes and lowde ſhoutes, as it were in a tryumphe, then all the halles and courtes do ſounde & rynge with the noyſe of trumpes with trumpettes/with tabrettes, then are in euery place lyghted tapers and torches then that ſolempne ſonge. Te deum laudamus is thundered out/ſo yͤ theſe triumphes do playnely repreſent vnto vs yͤ ymage of thoſe foliſhe kynges of Iſraell, whiche dyd brenne vp theyr ſones & doughters for a ſacrifyce in the honour of the Idole Moloch, and with yͤ dyuerſe lowde ſoundes of trūpes dyd brynge to paſſe, that the lamētable cryeng out and waylynge of them, that were in the myddes of the fyer, coulde not be harde. After the ſame maner doo theſe excellent parentes handle

Moloch.

theyr doughters and theyr neces, of whome they allure ſome by fayre meanes, and ſome full ſore agaynſte theyr wylles / they doo thruſte downe in to the pryſons of monaſteryes/ and for none other cauſe, but that theyr ryches, theyr poſſeſſyons, and that dygnyte of theyr hygh bloode maye be preſerued and vpholden, they are aſhamed to beſtowe them in maryage vpõ perſones of lower parentage. Howebeit yet this ſelfe ſame ſtudy, only to preſerue theyr ryches, dothe tourne vnto theyr very great damage & loſſe of goodes and ſubſtaũce/ for god dothe auenge and punyſhe this vnbelefe and myſtruſte, ſo that yͤ ryches of dukedomes and erledomes do neuertheleſſe decay, & all thynges do go backwarde as it were by a certayne fatall and predeſtyned deſtruccyon/whiche thynge doubtles ſhuld not be ſo yf the wycked parentes had not deſerued this wrath and vengeaunce of god, with theyr ſo cruell oblacyons & ſacryfyces of theyr ſones and of theyr doughters to the Idole Moloch/ for the innocent bloode ſo cruelly ſhed forth, for cauſe of mooſt vyle ryches, doth cry maynly ĩ to heuẽ, as dyd the bloode of ryghtuous Abel, whiche crye, with howe attent & hedefull an eare the lorde dothe herken vnto it, he hath ſuffyciently declared in Abell. Now to declare the thyng with a more playne and more famylyer example.

Abell.

Nunnes.

The Nunnes or ſacred vyrgyns now in our tyme, are for the moſt perte luſtye damoyſelles, and of floryſſhynge age/and created of god, to the entent that they ſhuld wedde and brynge forth chyldrē/ And it is not poſſyble for them contynually ſo to contayne and lyue chaſte, at the leaſte wyſe of theyr owne good wyll. For perpetuall contynencye and chaſtyte is an hyghe and the mooſt ſpyrytuall gyfte of god, which chaūceth but to fewe men. Beſydes this god, when he dyd fyrſt create man, and dyd make thē male & female. This his generall lawe, & his worde ſpoken by his owne mouth, he wyll not tobe ſo comēly taken awaye in ſo many perſones/or alwayes by the gyfte or rather the myracle of contynēcye tobe abrogated & adnulled, but ꝑpetuall cōtynēcie & chaſtyte is a very ſeldome thynge before god. yf now yͧ haddeſt a doughter or a kynſmā, which through errour

Cōtinēce

had ben entyſed in to this maner of lyuynge as a fyſſhe in to a wele : thou oughteſt rather (yf yͧ were a good man)to loſe thy lyfe and all thy goodes,then to leaue this ſoule thus in the mouth of yͤ deuyll. But thou leaſte thy ryches, leaſte thy domynyon, leaſt thy gloryous tytles, leaſte thy dygnyte myght be any thyng mynyſſhed, wylte thruſte downe thy chyldren with thyne owne hande in to the depe dongeon of helle, yea beynge very lothe and full euyll wyllynge. And what dothe then folowe? Herken, and I ſhal tell the in fewe wordes/verely I dyd neuer here that auricular cõfeſſyon of Nunnes, but yet by yͤ ſcriptures & wordes of the ſprete of god (whiche do on euery ſyde touche and moſt depely ſerche yͤ affeccyons of the hertes) I ſhall eaſely geſſe & as it were touche wt a nedle / vnto what ende this chaſtyte doth come/and I know well ynoughe, that this my dyuynacyon and coniecture wyll nothynge at all deceyue me. Fyrſte the yonge damoyſell, in whiche this hygh gyfte of chaſtite is not can nomore eaſely be without an huſband and the company of mā then ſhe can lyue without meate & drynke, and ſlepe, & ſuche other workes of nature. On the other ſyde alſo yong men or mē of myddle age cannot be wtout a wyfe, for it is as depely graffed ī them & as naturally gyuen vnto them to contynue and encreace theyr kynde by propagacyon: as it is eyther to eate or to drynke. Who ſoeuer therfore coueteth & gothe aboute nowe to ſtoppe and holde backe by his owne propre myght

a ꝓuerbe

& ſtrenth, this naturall inclynacyon, vertue & force gyuen hym of god, what other thyng dothe he, then yf one wolde go aboute to cauſe & brynge to paſſe, yͭ the fyre ſhuld not brēne/or the water not make moyſt, or yͭ a mã ſhuld lyue without eyther meate or drynke, Of this I do nowe inferre & conclude, that all ſuche maner Nunnes, how ſoeuer many there be of them, whether they be gentle mēnes or pore mens doughters, not hauige yͤ rare gyfte of chaſtytye, as very few haue or can haue do not kepe chaſtyte wͭ theyr owne good wyl but ful ſore agaiſt theri wylles they are without huſbandes. Now yf they do contayne by compulſyon & with an euyll wyl vndoubtedly they do leſe bothe lyues/that is to ſaye, this lyfe, & the lyfe eternall/for on both ſydꝭ they ſhall be in hell paynes here in intollerable heate ⁊ brennyng of the fleſſhe, and there in eternal fyre except repentaunce at yͤ laſte Lo vnto this extreme infelycyte, vnto this moſt wreched and myſerable ſtate yͧ doſte thyne owne ſelfe brynge thyne owne chyldrē and kynneſfolke: ⁊ all to yͤ entēt onlye, that thou mayſte raygne ⁊ kepe vpryght thy ryches, ⁊ thy domynyon. This is that excellēt ⁊ goodly frute of conſtrayned ⁊ enforced chaſtite, and of certayne cruell prynces ⁊ offycers, whiche wͭ ſo great madnes do go about to defēde monaſteryes and theſe great cruell pryſons as an holye thynge/⁊ to ſtoppe ⁊ holde backe nature, which can not be ſtopped it is an eaſye thyng to perſwade other folke, to cōpell other folke vnto chaſtyte: yf yͧ thy ſelfe haſte a wyfe, and canſt prouyde for thy ſelfe agaynſt the heates and flames of nature. But yͤ moſt wretched company, through this enforced ſyngle lyfe, doth in yͤ meane ſeaſon periſſhe in the myddes of the fyers of yͤ fleſſhe as it were i a certayne hell/ For where there is not wylfull chaſtyte by the ſpecyall gyfte of god: the nature be ſhe neuer ſo moche holden backe and kepte vnder by our power & ſtrength, yet ſhe holdeth on to do her owne operacyon and worke, & ſhe contynueth euen ſuche one, as god dyd create her/ conſydre yͤ reſt thy ſelfe, which of truthe myghte here be ſpokẽ, for ſhamefaſtnes wyll ſuffre me to declare no further of the incõuenyence and abhomynacyon yͭ foloweth all thoughe neceſſyte ſay the contrary, conſyderyng the blyndnes of the worlde. And albeit that I do of ſhamefaſtnes repreſſe my pen frõ that which ought as I ſayde before to be declared, yet notwithſtandynge thoſe yonge perſones bothe men and womẽ aforeſayd do I know well fele in thẽ ſelues what I meane & are therof both aſhamed, & ſore tormented, wher vpon it cõmeth to paſſe, that not onlye they do curſe theyr parentz but alſo god/and do dyſprayſe & extremely hate theyr condycion & ſtate, and do deteſt and crye out vpon all them, which gaue them counſayle vnto this thynge, and curſe the tyme yͭ euer they were borne or gotten to lyue in yͤ wrechydnes. Lo this was the purpoſe of yͤ deuyl, this was the thyng that he entẽdyd, and went about when he taught the vnder the coloure and ſemblaũce of holynes to ſtoppe and kepe vnder nature whiche without this hyghe and verye ſeldome gyfte of god can not by any meanes be ſtopped & kepte vnder. But to retourne to our purpoſe. I ſaye it is a thouſande partes better to leaue and forſake byſſhoprykes, and al maner hyghe offyces and dignytes, and to be a meane cytezen or an huſbandman: then vnder the colour and ſemblaunce of holynes to neglecte and not regarde the offyce of a byſſhoppe, or not to gyue dylygence at the leaſt wyſe that it maye be executed and fulfylled by other men. For there is no meane, and it is but vayne labours to ſeche for an excuſe.

The worde of god

THe worde of god abydethe & contynueth perpetually.

NOt onely byſſhopꝛykes, but alſo heuen and erthe ſhall paſſe awaye: but the woꝛd of god ſhal not paſſe away Take this as an oꝛacle/ ⁊ byleue this as verelye to be true, as yf god had ſpokẽ it to the mouthe to mouthe. yf nowe the pope, oꝛ his papiſtes (ſo as he now doth) wyll not ſuffre the to pꝛeche the goſpell purely, ⁊ (as Peter ſayth in the actes) boldely: then haſte yͤ a greatter and a moꝛe lauful cauſe to foꝛſake the byſſhopꝛyche.

Pꝛechers ought to pꝛeache. boldely

⁂

WE ought to obey god rather then men.

NEyther doo thou thynke, that thou haſte gayly wel fulfylled the offyce of a byſſhop, oꝛ that thou art excuſed, yt now before that thou thy ſelfe haſt red through earneſtlye, and haſt learned the bible & the ſcryptures, thou do begynne to walke euery where abrode throughout thy cyties, and conducte or hyer a preacher ye farre leſſe learned then thy ſelfe, to preache not the goſpelles, but mennes inuencyons, and perſeueraũce in the tradycyons of men and in the olde cuſtome/ſo as a certayne biſſhop dyd now of late tyme. When the wreched men haue ſuppreſſed yͤ goſpell, and haue taught humayne thynges, and nowe with the only coloure and bryghtnes of yͤ epiſcopall name (as thoughe ſo great a prynce coulde not teache any falſe thynges) now with perſones, I ſaye (whiche god dothe not accepte) they do go aboute to bleare yͤ iyes of men, and to breke forth ke forth with theyr auctoryte only. And in dede they ſhulde be wyſe in ſo doyng, yf this were as ſure ⁊ as a trew waye to amende theſe ſo great damages ⁊ loſſes of conſcyences, as it is an eaſy ⁊ an excedynge ſpedy waye. But why do they nowe to late abuſe ẏ ſymplycytye of the commen people, by ſuch maner high ⁊ proude promyſes. Why do they fede vs forth wᵗ moſte vayne promyſes? we wyll not (ſaye they) refuſe to laye our ſoules to pledge before god, that our doctryne is trewe/ yf they wyll earneſtly preach the goſpell and ẏ worde of god: why do they not duely prepayre them ſelues vnto ẏ offyce of a biſſhop? Why do they not hyre a wyſe ⁊ a vertuous mayſter, ⁊ take a byble in theyr handes, and fyrſt do lerne theyr owne ſelues, that they

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maye afterwardes teache other men? I truly wolde make answere to suche a byſſhoppe, that dyd with great wordes promyſe to lay his ſoule to pledge, & I wold ſaye vnto hym, that he ſhuld lay his ſoule to pledge vnto other credytours that are lyght of gyuynge credence. For I had leuer here leaue and truſt vnto the manyfeſt worde of god, then to the pleage euen of ſo great a lordes ſoule. For what yf yͤ deuyll ſhuld beare awaye this pleage, be it neuer ſo precyous? Howe ſhulde I then be prouyded for, and ſaued harmeles? Awaye therfore with thyne vncertayne pledge and vnſure cautyon, For I wold for my parte haue no ſuche byſſhop whiche ſhall make his ſoule the fundacyon of my helth & ſaluacyon, to the whiche ſoule I can not tell what ſhall happen, or what ſhall betyde it in an other worlde. But I wolde haue ſuche maner a byſſhop, which ſhall preache the goſpell vnto me, and ſet chryſt vnto me for yͤ foundacyon of my helth For here I am ſure to whome I may truſt. And here I do gyue no counſayle of amendement to that papyſtycall ſorte that wyll not amende, For they do ſtoppe theyr eares, and do not ſuffre thē ſelues to be taughte. But yf peraduēture there be any yet amonge them, whiche haue repented, & doo deſyre to be good and cryſten byſſhoppes and to worke yͤ helth and ſauegarde of them ſelues & of the people: yͤ onlye & pryncypall offyce and dutye of them (in cōparyſō of which all other thynges do nothynge belonge vnto a byſſhoppe) is to take care for the churches ⁊ congregacyon/ theyr offyce and dutye is to take care ⁊ ꝓuyde for poore folke/to walke aboute euery where, and to gyue dylygent labour eyther to preche or elles to cauſe to be preached not the tradycyons of men, but yͤ pure goſpell/and yͤ worde of god And as for thoſe ſhadowes and dumbe ymages blockes, mummers and maſkers, which ſpend a great parte of theyr lyfe in pompe and ryot, and whoſe belye is theyr god, and which do ſet theyr mynde al vpon earthly thynges: I haue (yf I be not begyled) largelye and playnely ynoughe ſpoken of them/ I haue nowe openly preached and ſhewed vnto thē that they ſhulde tourne frō theyr wycked waye. What can I doo more? I beſeche our lorde that he wyl vouchſaue to helpe forward